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THE MEDITERRANEAN CAMPAIGNS

WINTER, which limits offensive warfare in Europe, favours it in Africa and permits it round the whole Mediterranean region. That is why the less formidable of our enemies engages a disproportionate amount of our attention. Ever since the Italian disasters in Libya and Albania revealed the sickness of the Fascist régime, we have all been guessing, with the dubious help of Dr. Goebbels, whether and where the Germans will come to the aid of their tottering ally. This week we have at least part of the answer. They have used their air-arm to attack our fleet. They chose the ideal scene for such an operation. The Sicilian Channel is only eighty miles wide: Italy holds both its shores and midway are the guns of the island fortress of Pantellaria. Through this channel our ships were escorting convoys carrying cargoes destined to reinforce the Greeks. Not one of the supply ships was lost. But a squadron of fifteen Nazi dive-bombers assailed our warships with torpedoes and inflicted damage and casualties on three of our units: the aircraft-carrier *Illustrious*, one of our latest ships, the light cruiser *Southampton*, and the destroyer *Gallant*. We, in turn, sank an Italian destroyer and brought down a dozen planes—of the less important nationality. The Admiralty was slow in publishing its communiqués, which have been excessively reticent. The first communiqué does not tell us how serious the damage is, and while it states that the injured destroyer is safely in port, it is silent about the position of the two bigger units.

The rest of the picture from the Mediterranean is wholly reassuring. The Greeks are still advancing, albeit very slowly, in Albania, over precipitous mountain sides scourged by all the rigours of an exceptional winter. The Italians seem to be unable to rally for an enterprising defence, and the "resignation," if that be the correct term for it, of their commander in Albania, General Soddu, suggests that they are still vainly searching for a man and a strategy capable of reversing their disasters. The news from Libya suggests that the Italians no longer attempt to dispute our mastery in the air. The R.A.F. attacks unopposed all along the coast, and reports the complete abandonment of one big aerodrome, while the rest are strewn with the wreckage of shattered aircraft. Operations against the next objective, Tobruk, seem to be following the plan that succeeded so well against Sidi Barrani and Bardia.

Several indications suggest that we are on the eve of operations that may challenge the Italians in Abyssinia. They have made little use of the immense numerical superiority they possessed in this region when they entered the war. They took Kassala and forced us to evacuate Somaliland, but they risked no general offensive either against the Sudan or Kenya. Time is against them, for they are consuming their irreplaceable stores of oil and munitions. It may be significant that an offer has been made to them to facilitate the evacuation of their women and children through French territory. A speech by General Smuts suggests that the South African forces in Kenya are now ready for a major offensive. He spoke with confidence, and said plainly that our purpose must be to make an end of Italian rule in Africa. That declaration must have heartened Haile Selassie, who is directing the revolt of his people from Khartoum and distributing to their chiefs the arms they have hitherto lacked.

How much more do the Germans propose to undertake to help the Italians? They have certainly succeeded in keeping us all guessing whether they propose to attack Greece by marching into Macedonia or Thrace through Bulgaria. They are waging a press campaign against her Premier, Professor Filoff, who had ventured to remind them of their former dictum that National Socialism is not an article of export: times have changed, they now tell him, and all Europe is expected to adapt itself to the New Order. But have they yet demanded facilities for the passage of German troops through Bulgaria? That is firmly and officially denied from Sofia, which also states categorically that there are German troops on Bulgarian soil. What, then, are we to make of the astonishing Russian statement, issued through the Tass Agency, that Germany had not asked Russia's consent for such a use of Bulgarian territory, nor had Sofia consulted Moscow about it? This denial may be a warning and it

may have some effect, for it suggests at the very least that the Russians would do nothing to discourage the Turks if they were to treat such a move (as they say they will) as a *casus belli*. It may also be an attempt to win back Bulgarian confidence, which may have been shaken by the Nazi story that Russia had sold her consent to this move in return for Germany's permission to take Finland and Moldavia. But whatever the motive of this unusual declaration may have been, it suggests that Russo-German relations are neither intimate nor happy. Mr. Molotov's visit to Berlin may have resulted, as we are assured this week, in a further expansion of Russo-German trade, more especially in cereals, but clearly it did not establish mutual confidence between these two neighbours. In this atmosphere we doubt whether Germany will risk a march through Bulgaria.

Our American Arsenal

All the omens point to an easy passage through Congress of the "Foreign Aid" Bill, which empowers the President to draw from the American "arsenal" an indefinite amount of material support for us, and apparently also for the Greeks, on the "lend-and-lease" principle. Mr. Willkie's frank attitude of support should carry the main body of the Republican Party, which may be content to justify its existence as an Opposition by limiting the life of the Bill to two years and confining its aid to Great Britain. The less responsible leaders of the Opposition make up in eminence and violence what they lack in numbers. Mr. Hoover and Senators Taft, Wheeler, Bennett Clark and Nye are all opposing. It is said that the Bill makes the President a "dictator" and that it authorises him to drag America into the war. Rather more awkward may be the line on which Senator Wheeler is concentrating: that this country has vast available assets, more nearly $7,000 millions than the admitted $850 millions, and can afford to buy in the usual way. Mr. Bullitt and Mr. Kennedy may be called to testify before the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee, and the latter may not be helpful. But public opinion remains decidedly friendly and the Bill is popular. There are even signs that public opinion is so much on our side that it is becoming highly critical of Mr. De Valera's policy of neutrality, for Americans are even more disturbed by the possibility of an invasion of Ireland than we are ourselves. The bomber planes built for us in America are now being flown across the Atlantic, but as yet in disappointing numbers. Meanwhile, the prospect that sea-borne supplies will reach us without serious loss is decidedly brighter. The sinkings reported last week were the lowest since May, only 14,687 tons, or four ships. This may be due partly to the weather, which did not favour either planes or submarines; but the continued bombing of such U-boat bases as Lorient may also have had its influence. But without knowing the total tonnage afloat, it is difficult to interpret these encouraging figures with certainty.

Working-class Budgets

The Ministry of Labour have just published the results of the enquiry it conducted in 1937–38 in order to obtain a representative collection of working-class household budgets. The report is a social document of the greatest significance. The results can be summarised as follows. The average weekly expenditure of the households reviewed was 86*s.* 3*d.* The average number of persons in industrial households was approximately $3\frac{3}{4}$, of whom nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ were aged 18 years or over and one was a child under 14. The average number of wage earners was $1\frac{3}{4}$. Let us assume roughly that we are concerned with a typical working-class household with an expenditure of just over £4 a week earned by two of the persons, the household consisting of 4 persons, one under the age of 14. How is the expenditure allocated? How would you allocate it?

The cost of living index now in use is based on an enquiry conducted as far back as 1904, when the proportional allocation of working-class household expenditure worked out as follows. Food 60 per cent., Rent 16 per cent., Clothing 12 per cent., Fuel and light 8 per cent., Miscellaneous 4 per cent. The 1937–38 enquiry revealed the following changes in the percentage distribution. Food $39\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., Rent $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., Clothing 11 per cent., Fuel and light $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., Miscellaneous $29\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. We must be careful not to draw hasty conclusions from these statistics since the two investigations may not be strictly comparative, but it does appear that as a result of economic progress combined with social legislation the working classes have over the past 40 years acquired a larger margin over the bare necessities.

Nevertheless this is not the most important conclusion to be drawn from the statistics. The fundamental fact is that this is a world still afflicted with sore poverty. Great Britain has the highest standard of living in Europe and yet when this material civilisation is viewed under the statistical microscope the impression is mournful and pathetic. 1*s.* $9\frac{1}{2}$*d.* per week for fresh and tinned fruit for a household of four, $11\frac{3}{4}$*d.* for electricity, $3\frac{3}{4}$*d.* for culture, $2\frac{1}{2}$*d.* for books, stationery, pens and pencils, $7\frac{3}{4}$*d.* for holiday expenditure. People who can put down 7*s.* 6*d.* for a book and not worry about an additional 6*d.* on lunch or a pound extra for a holiday often fail to realise that half a crown a week is a very substantial sum to a working-class family. An extra halfpenny on the fare stage is a serious matter and the power of monopolies to stick extra farthings on to the price of household requisites is a social menace. Those who prate about the fecklessness of the poor would do well to study the summary of workers budgets given in the December, 1940, number of the *Ministry of Labour Gazette*. The *Gazette* lists 101 items of expenditure and many of these subdivide in practice. To attempt to apportion 86*s.* over these 101 items is to stand astonished at the economy of the workers. Out of this sum tobacco, drink, cinemas and other entertainments, and holiday expenditure account for 5*s.* 4*d.*—a sum which the middle-class income tax-payer will spend on a single lunch or on a round of cocktails.

Economic Notes *(by an Industrial Correspondent)*.

There has been much discussion about the need for universal compulsion of labour. The plain fact is that, save in a few very special cases, what is needed is not conscription of labour, or anything like it, but better organisation of industry for making proper use of the labour that is available, and for improving conditions of living for those who have to travel long distances or to live away from home. The failure to plan war production with any regard to the need for placing factories where labour could be made easily available is at the root of the trouble; and this has been made worse recently by unco-ordinated commandeering of factories in connection with "dispersal" on account of air damage, or the risk of it. The initial planning was very bad; and the confusion was made very much worse by the failure to take strong measures about billeting of munition workers as soon as the problem of congestion began to arise. Billeting has been a hopeless muddle, resulting in petty profiteering by landladies, and in a high rate of labour turnover that has seriously hampered production. In the crowded places, all available accommodation ought to have been taken over long ago, and rented at fixed prices, and made subject to regular inspection (e.g., as to meals provided, cooking facilities, and the like). Something of this sort is now apparently being done in one solitary town. It ought to have been done long ago in at least a dozen; and it is safe to say that it will soon have to be done in many more—for there is going to be much more rapid labour migration to the munitions centres during the next few months than there has been hitherto.

* * *

Compulsion will not be needed if this sort of muddle is put right—except perhaps for quite limited classes of workers. Trainees will be forthcoming in adequate numbers provided training facilities are improved, and training allowances put on a proper basis. The supply of less skilled labour is mainly a question of wages, transport, billeting, and not of compulsion. The difficulty that does make proposals for the extension of compulsion plausible is that of getting the limited supply of highly skilled labour rightly redistributed as the new or extended war factories get into production. But here the real problem is at bottom largely one of wages and conditions (again including proper control over billeting). The basic nuisance here is the big difference in earning possibilities and conditions of work between one factory and another—so that a man transferred to another factory in the national interest may find himself several pounds a week poorer as a result of the change, even though he is doing more important work. This happens because nothing was done early in the war (when it would have been relatively easy) to introduce a sensible wartime wage policy. This is the problem that must be tackled, now that we are on the eve of a wholesale redistribution of skilled workers between establishments and also between areas. To move men compulsorily

to work of greater national importance than they are now doing, and to expect them to acquiesce in big wage-reductions when they are transferred, is certain to breed intense discontent—especially as there is no principle at all governing the earnings possible in different establishments. I have long been convinced that the right way of dealing with this question is to put all highly skilled men on an upstanding salary instead of a wage, and to have this salary paid to them by the State, and not by the employer, irrespective of the place where they are called upon to work. But, of course, no such radical solution is possible without dealing first equally radically with the problem of putting to effective use available property. The *Times* itself has called attention to the chaotic situation in respect to living accommodation, which is just one type of property. Just as there must be a uniform and ruthless policy with respect to billeting so there must be for property at large and indeed for the whole system of war economics. Industrial capacity must be pooled. Non-essentials must be ruthlessly cut out. Available supplies must be equitably distributed. We shall not get this yet. We shall be driven to it step by step. The criticism of the new administrative arrangement is that it is only a step, another expedient instead of a solution.

* * *

For the moment we must accept the fact that there is no policy and that no comprehensive policy will be thought out by a powerful economic general staff and enforced on all Departments by one Minister who is not overburdened and distracted by detail. For the moment we must try to make the best of the latest expedient. But if Ernest Bevin is to do effectively his new job of co-ordinating the work of the productive services, he cannot possibly act as a satisfactory Minister of Labour as well. At least, he cannot under the existing arrangements, which mean in practice that when he is busy on War Cabinet affairs the Ministry of Labour is left to be run by the Civil Servants, with no one in a position to take responsible political decisions. If Bevin attempts to carry on with both his jobs along the existing lines, he is likely to fail at one or the other, if not at both. But it does not follow that he ought either to give up being Minister of Labour or to hand over the job of co-ordinating production to somebody else. There is an alternative, which has much to recommend it. Why not appoint a Deputy Minister of Labour, to act under Bevin's general directions, but with much more authority than an ordinary Under-Secretary? Assheton, the present Under-Secretary, would not do for this job: he is not strong enough, or enough in touch with the Trade Unions, or indeed with the employers' associations. Moreover, the Deputy Minister would have to be someone who could work in very closely with Bevin, and thoroughly know his mind. I should like to see Creech Jones, who is Bevin's Parliamentary Private Secretary at the Ministry of Labour, given the job. He would do it thoroughly well, and he and Bevin have long been used to working together. But he would need a status higher than that of Under-Secretary.

* * *

But if Bevin is to make real his co-ordinating control over production, he ought at least to have someone to help him there as well—possibly as Under-Secretary, or something in the nature of a political *chef de cabinet*, as distinct from a Civil Servant. But even more essential than this is a properly staffed department, strong enough to require information from the various departments, and also to make a really independent check of it when it has been supplied. Some of the economists who have been working in the War Cabinet Secretariat have been excellent people; but they are not so organised as to carry any weight with the heads of the main departments, and they have no effective administrative leadership. This is vital, because the indispensable thing in a co-ordinating authority is that it shall both be in a position to know the facts for itself, and have at its head persons of enough recognised weight for it to be impossible for departmental pundits to brush them aside. Bevin should organise behind him a really effective Civil Service staff of his own.

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THE GROUNDWORK OF RECONSTRUCTION

In a rather indefinite way, Mr. Arthur Greenwood has been transferred from organising—or failing to organise—war production to making plans for the reconstruction of this country when the war is at an end. At least, that is what his job appears now to be—though no executive power or departmental organisation seems to have been created with it. But reconstruction, if it is to be properly done, ought to begin, not when the war is over, but at once. There are, of course, many things that cannot be done under present conditions for want of materials or labour to do them; and there are respects in which the outlook is so uncertain that even the making of provisional plans is a very difficult matter. But there are certain elements in the problem of reconstruction that can be both accurately stated already, and acted on at once, in the sense that the ground can be cleared, and committal steps can be taken without using up any resources that are needed for prosecuting the war.

Foremost among the problems which Mr. Greenwood will now have to study (or is it Lord Reith who will have to study them, or both together?) is that of the physical rebuilding of our devastated areas. No one can say how large a proportion of our towns will stand in need of extensive, or even of complete, refashioning by the time we are again at peace; but it is already plain that the job will be a big one, and that it cannot be limited to the places which have been actually knocked down. It can be taken as certain that the industries which have been transferred from one part of the country to another, and the population which have necessarily been transferred with them, will not in many cases return, or wish to return, to the precise places from which they have been driven or removed. The industrial "shape" of Great Britain will be different after the war: the local and regional distribution of population will be different: the needs for transport, public services, and entertainment will be different in many respects. These differences will arise, whether we attempt to plan them or merely allow them to happen without any general planning of our economic future. In the majority of cases, except where production depends on local raw materials, there is no decisive reason why a particular kind of factory should be in one particular place. There are in most cases many possible sites and many districts in which quite suitable sites are available, and the actual places in which particular factories have grown up have been quite largely a matter of chance. It follows from this that, when a factory has once been compelled to move to a new area, there is often no particular reason why it should wish to move back again, even if its original premises have not been physically annihilated.

Where industries, left to themselves, would settle down after the war, and what amount of redistribution of populations this process of undirected resettlement would involve, nobody can possibly tell at present. What is entirely plain is that to allow resettlement to occur in this haphazard way would be exceedingly unwise. The worst faults of the city centres which are now being demolished, or are threatened with demolition, by enemy action arose largely because they grew up without any plan.

Most of all have the planlessness of our cities and of the location of factories in relation to the dormitory districts from which they draw their supplies of labour been the outcome of the private ownership of land. Everyone knows how Wren's plans for the reconstruction of London's centre after the Great Fire were defeated by the private interests of the numerous owners of patches of land which could be treated as separate building sites only at the cost of sacrificing almost every element of design in the recreation of the City. Everyone knows that almost the only piece of planned development ever carried out in the central parts of London—the great Regent's Park-Regent Street improvement—owed its success to the fact that most of it could be carried out on land belonging to the Crown.

It is a matter of simple common sense that, if we are to carry out any sensible reconstruction of our devastated urban areas, the boundaries of separately owned patches of land must be simply ignored, and rebuilding must be done under plans comprehending wide tracts of land, with power to pull down edifices that do not fit in with the new plans, even where no physical damage has been done to them. Roads, and traffic facilities generally, must be replanned in accordance with twentieth-century needs—and with a reasonable margin for meeting the possible needs of future centuries as well. The beneath-street services must be arranged in such ways as will reduce to a minimum the nuisance of tearing up the roads in order to get at drains, lay or repair cables, and so forth. And the green belt must be effectively

reintroduced where it has been lost, and open space provided in areas that have been built up regardless of health or beauty.

These things cannot possibly be done well unless the land on which they have to be done is publicly owned. The need is not merely for power to reshuffle surface ownerships in detail, or to modify boundaries here and there, but for ignoring the old arrangements altogether, except where buildings worth preserving are to be treated as starting points for the planning of the areas around them. The obviously right course is to take all urban and suburban land completely into the ownership of the State, so that the State, in conjunction with the local authorities directly concerned, can make and approve comprehensive plans of reorganisation without being under the necessity of continually trying to accommodate its plans to the demands of a host of private landowners. The case for taking agricultural land also into public ownership is overwhelming on different grounds; but with that question we are not concerned in this article.

We are not suggesting that the land should be taken by the State without compensation to its past owners. By all means let compensation be paid—on a basis of pre-war values. This basis of valuation, which is being used in settling the compensation due to owners of bombed properties, should clearly be applied also to landowners and to the owners of buildings which, not having been destroyed by bombing, are nevertheless scheduled for removal in accordance with the plans for urban reconstruction. Such a basis of compensation will no doubt hit some owners more than others; but so will any other that can be suggested. It would be clearly unfair to compensate either landowners or the owners of condemned properties on a higher scale than owners of property destroyed by enemy action; and either the pre-war value, or some alternative to it, should be applied uniformly to every kind of property affected.

Given public ownership of urban and suburban land—including enough countryside to enable replanning to proceed along generous lines—it would become practicable to tackle the problems of rebuilding without being deterred by the possibly heavy decline in land values in one place as against another. If private ownership of land is allowed to remain, every attempt by the State (or by the regional authorities which, we hope, will be created to undertake a large part of the task) to replan in such a way as to lessen the size and importance of one town, and aggrandise another, will be met by an outcry from a host of infuriated land and property owners who will accuse the State of favouring others at their expense. On the other hand, if the State owns all the land, it will not matter to it in the least if land values fall in one place, provided they rise somewhere else.

The sooner this change is made, the better. Already, as sites are cleared after the buildings on them have been destroyed, the question of their future use is arising, and plans for the re-exploitation of the sites by private enterprise are being laid. Every such plan entrenches a new vested interest which will claim its right to be conciliated or bought out when the time comes for actual reconstruction of devastated city areas. The nationalisation of the land here and now would obviate all these difficulties.

We realise the political difficulty of this proposal. The word "nationalisation" ranges us at once in two camps. In time of war unity in the war effort is essential, and the Left must not press fer changes that cannot be effected without a struggle that would be a gift for Hitler. But nothing of the sort is involved in our present argument. Our aim is to rebuild, with the health and comfort of the whole community as our objective. That can be done satisfactorily only under public ownership. There is nothing in that argument that need embarrass a public-spirited Conservative, and we wish to think that most men who use that label like administrative chaos and speculative gains no better than we ourselves. Today the old party divisions have become misleading: millions who used to vote "Conservative" are ready to-day for the most drastic changes.

In fact, the immediate enactment of a law for the transference of land ownership to the public would be the best possible assurance that the Government does mean to tackle seriously the problem of post-war reconstruction, and not merely to tinker with it in such a way as to allow all the old problems of overcrowding, traffic congestion, lack of open space, and planless agglomeration of buildings to reproduce themselves in our cities after the war. It would also make possible—what has been very nearly impossible hitherto—the creation of brand-new cities instead of the endless addition to existing urban communities. Some years ago, P.E.P. put forward a most interesting suggestion that the town of Merthyr, having lost its economic basis, should be removed entirely to a new and more favourable site. The project was attractive, and fundamentally sound; but it was all too evident that, under the conditions of local government and property ownership in pre-war Britain, there was not the smallest prospect of getting it carried into effect. The position is, or can easily be made, quite different now, when large-scale rebuilding has to be faced in many places as a matter of sheer necessity, and will probably have to be faced in a good many more. We can move, not only Merthyr, but a great many other derelict towns; and we can set to work to scale down overgrown urban areas, to plant brand-new "colonial" cities, and generally to distribute our population much better over the face of Great Britain, from the standpoint both of health and amenity and of economic opportunity. It is, however, certain that we shall not be able to do these things if private rights of property ownership are to be retained in their old forms.

PROBLEMS OF A RECEPTION AREA

[Mr. Horabin is Liberal M.P. for North Cornwall and discusses evacuation with special knowledge of the problems of reception areas.]

WE know this much about the immediate future. When the Second Battle of Britain begins in real earnest, Nazi air attacks upon our ports and industrial centres will be substantially intensified. To reduce their effect upon war output, evacuation upon a much larger scale is indispensable. To achieve this, conditions imposed upon evacuees and householders alike in the reception areas must be both tolerable and acceptable.

From my experience in Newquay, which is a reception area, from the correspondence I have received from other areas, I say unhesitatingly that the evacuation of mothers with children is a failure. It is a failure because of divided responsibilities, of lack of drive, of sheer downright mismanagement.

The first step towards sound organisation must be to make one authority responsible for both planning and execution. At present the Ministry of Health plans and pays the full cost, but the Minister of Health delegates his responsibility to billet and look after the welfare of evacuees to the local authority in the reception area. How can he expect the majority of local authorities to perform these duties when they have had no experience of social welfare work on the scale necessitated by this gigantic mass migration, which, from their point of view, has suddenly overwhelmed them? Indeed, the local authorities in many of the reception areas have no idea there is such a thing as social welfare. Their function has always been to keep down rates, not to spend money—and the successful handling of evacuation in reception areas depends on spending money freely.

How can a local authority billet impartially? Too many vested interests are involved. The well-to-do escape having mothers with children billeted on them, while the poorer householders get their spare accommodation filled. Those householders with families billeted on them resent the imposition when they see householders with much more space go free. Obviously evacuation cannot be successful until the evacuation and billeting officer in a reception area is directly responsible to the Minister of Health and not to the local authority.

When I have suggested that the local authorities should be superseded over evacuation, passive defence or food, the departments concerned always say that under our democratic system they must work through the local authority. That, to my mind, is a weak attempt to justify sloppy organisation.

After all, our democratic system has ceased to exist in certain vital essentials. When we in the House of Commons extended the life of the present Parliament for the duration of the war, we ceased to represent anyone but ourselves. We became self-elected. When Parliament suspended local elections for the period of the war and extended the life of local councils, those local councils ceased to represent their electors. To-day they represent the will of Parliament and nothing else. To supersede them over evacuation does not imply an attack on democracy. Let us cease blaming democracy for what it is not responsible. Ministers have been given powers by Parliament. They can control the administrative machine. To place local evacuation officers directly under the control of the Ministry of Health will not in itself solve the problem. The Ministry must give its local officers full powers to act.

Let me give two examples of how the administrative machine defeats resolute action, thereby causing evacuated mothers and children to pay the price in ill-health, misery and squalor.

About seventy women and children from the first batch of evacuees sent to Newquay were housed in an hotel called "Belsfield." The only furniture the women had in their bedrooms were camp beds; they had nothing in which to keep clothes, no floor coverings, no chairs.

Complete families were housed in each bedroom, so that there might be five or six in a bedroom designed for two. The mothers had to wash their clothes and hang them out to dry in their bedrooms. After the first week, when I visited the place, children were already ailing with bronchitis and chills. We can well pardon the tactlessness of the first matron sent down by the L.C.C., who told these women they would be better off in London.

I took up the case of this hostel, where conditions were as bad as in the worst London slum, with the Minister of Health himself. Instructions were at once sent from Whitehall through the Regional Office to the local Ministry of Health Officer to furnish the place adequately. I want, at this point, to stress the fact that all the Ministry of Health Officers, whether in Whitehall, Region or Newquay, whom I met in connection with evacuation are without exception practical, able people whom, if I were responsible, I would employ on the job. In spite of this, when I visited "Belsfield" again, on Christmas Day, I found that the labours of everyone concerned, from Mr. MacDonald downwards, to put this hostel right, had only produced a scrubby, undersized mouse in the shape of fifteen chairs.

Why? The answer is a simple one. If the place had been furnished to give the evacuees the decency and modest comfort to which, in Mr. MacDonald's own words, they are entitled, the Ministry of Health auditors might object to the cost. Thus, after going into the cost of chests of drawers, hooks behind doors covered with a piece of cretonne, were being considered as an outrageous substitute. The covering of all floors had been abandoned, and the covering of the floor in one room only was to be undertaken. In the meantime, the women and children lived under these conditions, and two husbands who were down for Christmas were rightly considering the question of taking their families back to London. And the shocking thing is this. During the whole of these weeks more than enough furniture to meet the needs of these families was stored in two rooms of that hotel, kept from them by a 4½in. brick wall built for the purpose.

Why has the Minister not requisitioned that furniture? Is it because the rights of property come before the decencies of life for victims from the London front line? Why are the powers willingly given to the Government in the "Persons and Property Act" not used? Why does the Minister allow auctioneers to refuse to sell furniture lying in their stock rooms to his department, because they are waiting for higher prices? Furniture, tons of it, from dozens of hotels requisitioned by the Ministry of Pensions and Service departments, is stored in empty houses and hotels. Why is this furniture not requisitioned? Why are the dwelling-houses in which much of it is stored not requisitioned for the use of evacuees? Is it because the rights of property are sacred? Are we fighting this war in defence of property? Why has the Evacuation Officer at Newquay been told to go slow on requisitioning furniture, while evacuees live in misery for the want of it?

Another administrative breakdown is the unsatisfactory working of the Assistance Board in relation to evacuees. Early on I met a number of weeping women on a Friday afternoon who had been refused assistance by the Assistance Board and by the Public Assistance Committee. Most of them had their Army allowance due on the following Monday, or they expected their usual weekly remittance from their husbands on that day, but on the Friday they were without money to buy food for the week-end. One woman with two children had 5d. only in her pocket, another with five children had 1s. 2½d. Yet there was no one who would help the women over their temporary difficulties. I saw the Ministry of Health, and they undertook to put them right. They were put right for one week when an Assistance Board Officer visited Newquay on the Friday, but after that they relapsed into the old unsatisfactory state. On the Friday before Christmas, for instance, a woman with three children had 1s. 6d. in her pocket and was, therefore, unable to buy her rations for the following week. The remittance she expected from her husband had not turned up. Once again the Employment Exchange, which represents the Assistance Board in Newquay, refused to help the woman. The solution is simple. Either the Assistance Board should give the manager of the Employment Exchange full powers to act in such cases, or a representative of the Assistance Board with full powers should visit Newquay every Friday. Under present conditions women and children evacuated from the industrial front line pay for official inertia in terms of misery and hunger.

As for the Cornwall Public Assistance Committee, they seem to do the minimum for these people necessary to avoid a public outcry. A destitute woman and child were evacuated to Newquay. Their papers showed that they were suffering from definite malnutrition. For the two of them the P.A.C. allowed 12s. a week, which, under pressure, was first increased to 15s. and then to 17s. It must be remembered that the cost of living for these people is substantially higher in Newquay than in London.

Finally, there is the vexed question of billeting on private householders. I have a great deal of sympathy with householders in reception areas. It is intolerable that hospital accommodation in a reception area should be so inadequate, that evacuees suffering from infectious diseases cannot be immediately removed from a private house, particularly when the accommodation suitable for temporary hospitals is used for storing furniture.

It is intolerable that dirty women, and children who are not house-trained, should be allowed to pollute clean households. Here again the solution is simple. In each reception area there should be a reception hostel to which all evacuees go when they first arrive. This hostel should be supervised by a trained welfare worker, who would classify the evacuees. Dirty women and children should be sent to hostels where, under the supervision of a matron, they would be trained into clean ways of life. The remaining evacuees should be sorted out so that as far as possible they are billeted on householders with whom they enjoy some community of interest. Communal cooking and feeding should be introduced without delay into every reception area, because one of the greatest difficulties in the private household is the inadequacy of the cooking arrangements to cope with the main meal of two families. A comfortable social centre for the evacuees is also essential, not only to relieve the householder from having the evacuee always in the house, but also to provide an amusement and instruction centre for the evacuees themselves. Robbed of their houses, many of these women do not know what to do with their time.

If these reforms are carried out, and not only talked about, there will be no excuse for householders to refuse to hand over space accommodation for evacuated women and children. There will be even less excuse for mean-hearted householders to set out deliberately to make the life of evacuated women a misery. I will refrain from quoting some of the shocking cases I have come across.

There will be no excuse for the "better off" householders to avoid taking in evacuees at all. In Newquay people with houses of a rateable value of less than £30 a year have done their duty nobly. Some with houses rated above that value have also done their duty. But, broadly speaking, the patriotism of the "better off" sections of the community stops dead at their own doorstep. They expect to fight this war on the cheap without any sacrifices of their own comfort. "If the dirty Londoners get hell knocked out of them by Hitler, so much the worse for them; they must not come into our nice clean houses and disturb our comfort." Such is the point of view of far too many of the better off in most reception areas. This I find is so deep-seated that I am beginning to ask myself whether our much-vaunted national unity is not so much ballyhoo. If Mr. Churchill is wise he will broadcast to these unpatriotic people in his own inimitable way about their duty in this hour of crisis. His is the only voice that stands any chance of penetrating their complacency.

T. L. HORABIN

A LONDON DIARY

ON April 11th, 1917, *Punch* published a cartoon, showing Mr. Punch at the door of the Ministry of Food asking the commissionaire if this was the place where they controlled food. "Well, sir, 'controlled' is perhaps rather a strong word, but we give hints to householders and we issue grave warnings." Sir William Beveridge recalled this cartoon in his book on *British Food Control*, one of that famous series of administrative histories of the last war, prepared for the Carnegie Foundation. History is repeating itself in an oddly ironic way. Lord Woolton, like Lord Devonport at that period, is still at the stage of making appeals to the consumer and to the trade to behave like little gentlemen, without telling them how little gentlemen do behave in such circumstances. He announces a decision to fix a price of a list of unrationed foodstuffs to prevent profiteering ramps on the part of the food trade; and yet one thing that the last war proved is that when the Ministry tries to fix prices of goods which it does not own, the only result is to make them disappear from the market. (Onions have become as notorious in this war as rabbits were in the last.) In the last war Mr. Runciman did his best not to control food at all; in this war we began with a scheme that had been prepared ever since 1937. We have not yet quite moved from the Lord Devonport "appeal" stage; Lord Woolton does not yet seem ready to play the part of Lord Rhondda, who effectively controlled all foods during the last eighteen months of the war. But the ironic part is that the change in 1917 was brought about more by Mr. Winston Churchill than by anyone else. It was he who led the attack in the House of

Commons, declaring that the question of food prices should be "put boldly on to a war basis"; it was he who pointed out the immense saving that would have been effected if instead of moving on stage by stage to control, the Government had firmly taken charge of the industry from the beginning. He saw through the excuse that all the difficulty was due to submarine sinkings, just as some people see through it to-day. Indeed if you read Mr. Churchill's speech of November 18th, 1916, you will see that logic was leading him to the disagreeable conclusion that in war there is only one remedy for the glaring inequalities, the wages and food price ramps and all the variations and anomalies that come when the Government is forced deliberately to strangle some trades in order to concentrate on necessities. The remedy is something like a flat wage for all and a universal economic control. Inexorably the war pushes the Government on to the choice between this unpleasing prospect and a dangerously inefficient war machine. The last war ended before the process had reached the point of universal control—and after the war we went back to the old system. If the egg is more thoroughly scrambled this time, as seems likely, and if the control is in fact in the hands of monopolists who merely move from their own offices to Whitehall—largely what is happening now—then the result is a form of Fascism; given a government which insists on the ownership of essentials and is determined after the war to use its power to expand and not permit capitalism to restrict for the sake of profit, then you have the basis for an intelligent Socialism.

* * *

The People's Convention was most efficiently organised and managed by the Communists. No dissentient voice was heard. It changed its venue to London because the Manchester Free Trade Hall was knocked out by Hitler's bombers—really very inconsiderate in view of the flattering attention recently paid to the Convention in German broadcasts. Ivor Montagu ingeniously covered Hitler's welcome of the Convention by arguing that this bomb proved his knowledge that it was his "staunchest enemy." All the grievances of the dispossessed were concentrated at this gathering. The biggest grievance is the war itself: war has always been the most monstrous form of exploitation of the working classes. Unfortunately, before the war (and after it began) the Communist Party argued that this would be different from other wars; it was a Trotskyite and defeatist deviation to suggest that it could not be turned into a People's War against Fascism. Whether Communist strength grows now depends on whether this tendency simply to fight the war with Big Business in Whitehall is stopped or not. The "masses" are too informed now to fall for the old slogans and to be content with pie in the sky when they die. They remember "homes for heroes" as well as the necessity of defeating Hitler. The electoral truce, the absorption of the Labour Party leaders in the Government and the concentration of their energies in the terrific administrative problems of the war leaves a gap wide open for alternative leadership. The Communist Party means to fill that gap. The puzzle is whether they are prepared in their hearts tacitly to aid a German victory with the illusory hope of making a revolution afterwards, or whether they are relying on the R.A.F. to defeat Hitler while they increase their power.

* * *

Naturally the National Peace Council's meetings at Oxford were altogether a smaller affair. It was noticeable that even this middle-class Conference was not solely concerned with the sort of peace that it would like after the war. One speaker after another insisted that we must lay the foundations of our better social order by founding a more egalitarian society during the war. Madariaga and Professor Carr had an exciting duel, and Professor Laski outlined a moderate programme of social change which he thought possible even in wartime. The audience, of course, was composed, as National Peace Council audiences always are, of a mixture of pacifists of various brands, as well as all apostles of collective security and of social revolution. There was real agreement about the absolute necessity of making common cause with the peoples of Italy and Germany, and of repudiating the philosophy of Sir Robert Vansittart, who wants us to regard the Germans as a pariah race. Here, I believe, is the solution for people who fear to become a mere stage army of the good passing resolutions about "war aims." They can use all their influence to stop the country ever forgetting that our hope lies in co-operation with the submerged anti-Fascists all over the Continent.

* * *

I met James Joyce once and that was in the dark. In the physical sense my impression of him is indistinct. About his personality I had the most definite and curious impression—one which I cannot hope to convey. It was like this. Robert and Sylvia Lynd gave a party one summer night in 1931; we strolled and talked in their garden in Keats Grove by lantern light. Joyce was the guest of the evening. He was standing in a corner in the deep shadow when I was introduced to him. I could see nothing except a dark suit and the outline of large spectacles. He began talking volubly about a singer named Sullivan, who had been recently banned in England. His words poured out indignantly. Sullivan was the greatest living singer. People talked of singing Otello. In Otello there were so many G's in alt and so many lower C's. This was nothing. Sullivan could sing "Guillaume Tell," which needed a far greater reach; in that part there were some hundreds of G's in alt and even more lower C's. He reeled off figures and suddenly stopped. He'd forgotten how many. He was thoroughly annoyed and there in the blackness he began to feel in his pockets for a piece of paper, on which, it seemed, all these musical statistics were written down. His annoyance had something grotesque about it. No one minded in the least how many top G's there were. Even if the figures were written down in such large writing that he could read it, it was far too dark to see anything. But clearly he felt that he had failed in some way; the figures which must have taken hours to work out from the two parts were of great importance to him. He was like a collector who has lost an unusual piece that spoils the set. I suggested that he might write for THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION about Sullivan. Eventually, after some correspondence, he agreed, not to write an article direct for the paper, but to publish a letter to his favourite singer. I believe that in fact he never wrote for any periodical. We got over the difficulty by publishing his article with an editorial note explaining that it was a letter written to Mr. Sullivan after an occasion on which he had been carried through the streets of Marseilles in celebration of his performance of Guillaume Tell. The article finally appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION on February 27th, 1932. It is full of enthusiasm, strange expressions, obscure references and private jokes. It ends up "Send him canorious, long to lung over us, high topseasoarious! Guard safe out Geoge!"

* * *

The return of the Sadler's Wells ballet for a five weeks' season at the New Theatre is an event of importance in the entertainment world, The almost passionate enthusiasm with which it was received by a large audience at the opening performance showed how much people long for colour and gaiety. The Sadler's Wells ballet has been winning new audiences lately in Devonshire, at the Dartington Hall Theatre, where Frederick Ashton has composed and rehearsed his new ballet, *The Wanderer Fantasia*, to be produced in London on the 27th of this month. The stage of the New Theatre is a delightful setting for ballet, and even with matinee performances the season should have an enormous success. On Saturday the same programme is repeated twice: it includes *Harlequin in the Street* and *Dante Sonata* and *Façade*.

* * *

The *P.E.N. News* prints a poignant memoir of Rudolf Olden, who was lost with his wife, Ika, in the *City of Benares*. He was interned last June, and the feeling of humiliation and bitter disappointment together with life in a disused, vermin-infested cotton mill broke his health, which was never very robust when he was in exile in England. His internment was the measure of Home Office lunacy: he lived for little except to destroy the Nazis, who had wrecked the democratic Germany he served. His wife was a fine and spirited woman; I well remember how undaunted she was when she called to tell me, with laughter that barely hid indignation, about the absurd search of her house and the detention of her husband. They would have fought well for England if Sir John Anderson or the War Office had let them. Olden was not released until the Americans made him a Professor of History at New York University, and then only under the condition that he left the country at once. The last thing he showed his friends was the British Travelling Paper, issued to one who had long been deprived of a German passport. The clause pledging the issuing authority to permit the holder's return was deleted with an abundance of red ink. According to the P.E.N. memoir, he showed it again and again. He could not get over that abundance of ink.

* * *

People often say that it is disgraceful that the *Daily Worker* should publish such unpleasant reports as the following:

> It is difficult these days for the bona-fide traveller to find a bed for the night in areas where bombing is rare or unknown. Those hotels which have not been taken over are filled with well-to-do refugees who too often have fled from nothing. They sit and read and knit and eat and drink, and get no nearer the war than the news they read in the newspapers. . . . Sometimes

these refugees come from other reception areas. And sometimes if a stray bomb should fall near they will load a motor car with food and comforts and take themselves off to an even more remote part of these islands. . . . Such refugees as these should surely be barred from entering certain areas. I could not avoid spending a night here. The first two hotels I tried had been taken over. A third, fourth and fifth—ever smaller and only just hotels—were full. The biggest of these, I was assured by a regular visitor, was largely filled by people who had been resident for three months and more, though many came from officially listed reception areas and had yet to hear the noise of a falling bomb. There they sit and sleep, after eating a dinner of soup, fish, joint, sweet, savoury, wine and coffee, and three other meals on the same scale daily.

P.S.—I hasten to withdraw my reference to the *Daily Worker*. I got my cuttings mixed. The above extracts come from the *Times*.

* * *

Two recent bombing remarks. A charwoman complained of the number of "indecency bombs" recently dropped by the Germans, and in another house when incendiaries were raining down the housewife said: "I suppose it doesn't matter if Rome burns as long as we can go on fiddling."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to R. S. R. Fitter.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Canon Dart talked to the (Political) Society on the downfall of France and said that the class of rich industrialists in France was imbued with Communism, and as this was also the ruling class the effect on the Government had been disastrous.—Public School Magazine.

The Clerk (of the Pewsey Rural District Council): Practically all the condemned houses in our district are in the hands of evacuees.—*Wiltshire Gazette.*

Said to have visited air-raid shelters, where her foreign accent alarmed people, a 35-years-old Spanish-born woman, widow of an Englishman, was told by the presiding magistrate, Mrs. J. B. Zimmern, at Manchester City police court yesterday: "If you have to go into a shelter, remember not to make people afraid. You have rather a foreign accent and people are nervous."—*News Chronicle.*

An assertion that the Ministry of Information was giving Newcastle far more lectures than other parts of the country, and that many of these were not information but "a certain form of insidious propaganda," was made by Mr. Alfred Denville, Conservative M.P. for Central Newcastle, in a talk to women constituents yesterday.

"Information should mean that a naval man comes to tell what the Navy is doing, or an Army man tells about the military situation, or a civil defence man tells what he is doing in air raids. That would be information," he said.

"To go round giving lectures on psycho-analysis—that is an insult to Newcastle."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"I can't guarantee that there will be enough meat available to meet the coupons this week, but there may be next week, and I shall be very angry if there is not enough in the following week."—Lord Woolton, reported in the Daily Press.

EDUCATION. II—ADULTS AND ADOLESCENTS

FIRST as to the adolescents, the 15 to 18's. The position here is complicated and conceals a danger. The Education Act, 1936, raised the school-leaving age to 15. Although the Government considerably weakened the force of this Act by a long list of exemptions, the Act was justly regarded as a considerable advance. The celebrated Spens Report provided for the raising of the school-leaving age to 16. If this further reform had been adopted—and before the war it seemed not beyond the bounds of possibility—a reasonably satisfactory post-primary education would have been available for all children who, after leaving their junior schools at the age of 11, would have had five years' instruction in a senior school.

At the outset of the war the 1936 Act, which had still to be put into force, was suspended; suspended, that is to say, not repealed. Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, speaking for the Board of Education, was specific on the point. "I want," he said (October, 1939), "to give our categorical assurance that this Bill" (the Education Emergency Bill) "is a suspension and not a repeal of the Act. . . ." "The Act of 1936," he added in a speech last March, "has been postponed and there is no going back on the principle of raising the leaving age."

Owing to the suspension of the Act it was still true on the outbreak of war, as it is true to-day, that more than 80 per cent. of the children in this country were receiving no education of any kind after the age of 14.

One of the outstanding innovations of the Fisher Education Ac of 1921 was the establishment of Day Continuation Schools. In effect, all young people between the ages of 14 and 18 were to be compelled to attend school in their employer's time, for eight hours a week, and of these eight hours a certain proportion was to be devoted to physical training. The Continuation School Section of the Fisher Act was never brought fully into operation and fell gradually into desuetude. (In 1938 there were only forty Day Continuation Schools of various grades in the country, attended by some 20,000 pupils. Only Rugby among Local Education Authorities was working the scheme compulsorily.) Before the 1936 Act a formidable campaign was conducted by those who wanted to see the principle of the Continuation School made compulsory as an *alternative* to raising the school-leaving age to 15. While those who were in favour of the raising of the school-leaving age saw no objection to the Continuation School principle being applied *after* the children had left school, they strongly contested the view that part-time education to the extent of eight hours a week, administered to young people who were already at work in shop or factory or mine was an acceptable substitute for full-time education, even if full-time education were to last only for a year. This contention won the day and found expression in the 1936 Act.

Now that the Act has been suspended, the Continuation School proposal has been revived, but revived in a mutilated form. Some months ago, the War Office set up a Directorate in conjunction with the Board of Education to supervise the provision of facilities for physical recreation for young people. The scheme proposed was voluntary and no exception could be taken to it, but what is now being suggested is that the physical training provisions of the Fisher Act should be introduced and made compulsory; it is being suggested, in other words, not that young people should go to school for eight hours a week in their employers' time, but that they should receive compulsory physical training for one or two hours a week in their employers' time. Here are the relevant passages from the President of the Board's speech in the House on October 16th of last year:

> Therefore it occurred to me that unless conditions became very much worse, that part of the Fisher Act concerning physical education and involving the release of boys and girls from their work, say, for an hour or two a week, was a more practical proposition, and was, at any rate, within the bounds of eventual realisation. . . . If I am successful in this project, I shall regard what would have been done in regard to physical education as the first instalment of carrying out the full operation of the Fisher Act.

The danger here is precisely the danger against which those who fought for the compulsory raising of the school-leaving age sought to guard, the danger, namely, that the Day Continuation School principle should be accepted as a *substitute* for the raising of the school-leaving age. The war comes to an end; the suspended 1936 Act is not brought into operation but remains suspended; instead, the remaining provisions of the Day Continuation School scheme are brought into operation, and, in addition to the one or two hours' physical instruction, children get some six or seven hours a week education. . . . I do not say that this will happen, but education is like liberty in that the price of its maintenance is perpetual vigilance, and it behoves its friends to be very much on their guard to see that this does not happen.

Of the education of adults there is less to report. At the universities, with the exception of London, things are fairly normal. One hears of students complaining of the unnecessary interruption of lectures by air-raid alerts—"I worked all through the summer in the hop fields where we had half a dozen alerts a day, but we never stopped for them," a Cambridge undergraduate told me. "But here, directly the siren sounds, old —— knocks off his lecture and scurries to shelter, where he indites a letter to the *Times* on the necessity for reprisal bombing"—but in general university life is singularly little affected.

Similarly with W.E.A. and Adult Education work in general. By the end of October 2,113 classes had been organised by the W.E.A. up and down the country; the corresponding figure for last year was 2,120. There has been a little trouble with the Ministry of Mines who have found difficulty in accepting the view that the maintenance of W.E.A. classes is of sufficient importance to justify an extra allowance of petrol for the tutor's car; but this, I understand, has been largely overcome.

Let us not minimise the achievement which this figure represents. People are working harder than ever before; there is the difficulty of sparing time to cope with the delays of transport; the difficulty of sparing energy to cope with the black-out; the difficulty of sparing a corner of minds preoccupied with the thousand and one worries of wartime for the things of the mind. War, as has been well said, destroys the margins of civilisation. Nevertheless, as the

figures quoted show, there is a persistent and wholly admirable drive on the part of students and tutors alike to keep the margin on which education dwells intact. Even in Liverpool, which has continuously felt the weight of the Blitz, there are 100 W.E.A. classes in being as against 123 this time last year.

Mention of the W.E.A. prompts, nay it demands, a reference to two first-rate pamphlets which this organisation has recently published, the first entitled "The School Leaving Age and Day Continuation Schools," by Shena D. Simon, from which part of the foregoing has been taken; the second, a manifesto, "Public Education and the War," which summarises the present situation in regard to the education of school children, and contains material which suggests that the situation is certainly not less serious than I had indicated in my first article. The manifesto concludes with a series of admirable recommendations devoted to securing that the Board of Education is given "whatever new powers it may need to ensure that every child of school age is under the care and supervision of teachers, whether in town or country, in homes, billets or hostels." I remarked above that the price of education is perpetual vigilance. All honour to the W.E.A. for their constant determination to see that the price is paid. This organisation is, indeed, the veritable watch-dog of education.

While the condition of adult education in the provinces is fairly satisfactory, in London the effects of the Blitzkrieg have been little short of disastrous. The day colleges of the University having been evacuated, the task of carrying on adult education has fallen upon Birkbeck, whose students normally earn their living in the daytime, upon the various L.C.C. institutes, upon the Polytechnics, and upon colleges for working people such as Morley and the Working Men's College in Crowndale Road. Broadly speaking, all evening work has had to be stopped, since people naturally want to get home before the Blitzkrieg. Birkbeck, although badly bombed, has opened for daytime students, and a fair number attend. For the rest, a gallant attempt is being made to concentrate University classes and lectures into the week-end. Classes begin at midday on Saturday and continue until teatime on Sunday. Similar arrangements have been made at Morley College, at the City Literary Institute, and at the Polytechnics. (The Senior Day Departments of the Polytechnics are carrying on as usual.)

It is a gallant attempt, but it would be idle to pretend that it is much more than that, although during the week-end the limited accommodation at Birkbeck is taxed to capacity. Elsewhere evacuation, recruiting, Sunday work, dispersal and uncertainty have played havoc with attendances. It is no joke facing a journey from the suburbs to the centre on a Sunday morning when you have to make it every other day of the week. Morley College has been partly destroyed, and week-end classes have been held in a neighbouring L.C.C. school; but the numbers in attendance are only about one-tenth of those attending last year, and a twentieth of the normal peacetime crowd. Classes organised in London by the W.E.A. are not less affected. Early in December some 60 classes had been organised in the London area as compared with 223 a year ago, although it is hoped substantially to increase this number during the coming months. The Board of Education has sought to meet the situation by introducing modifications into the Adult Education Regulations. Thus the number of students required for attendance at a tutorial class before a grant can be earned has been substantially reduced, but it cannot be said that the authorities responsible for administering the regulations have shown a similar elasticity. The situation in London is in any event so difficult, the importance of maintaining adult education in face of the difficulties so great, that one might feel justified in looking to the authorities to do everything in their power to enable tutorial classes to be held. Yet cases have occurred where recognition of such classes has been refused in circumstances in which a reasonably generous interpretation of the regulations would have admitted them. Apart from this, there can be nothing but praise for the determination with which students and tutors alike have insisted on meeting on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings to forget the war, even at the cost of being only too forcibly reminded of it during the hours which they must spend getting to and from their meetings.

C. E. M. JOAD

CRIME AND CIRCUMSTANCE

AT a time when nearly all the civilised world regards wholesale murder, incendiarism and the destruction of the fruits of human labour and skill as a man's first duty and noblest achievement, it seems futile to bother our heads about such relatively small matters as crime and disease. Still, wars hitherto have always come to an end and are soon forgotten. Such, probably, will be the fate of this war; then the problems of crime and disease—their prevention and their cure—will recover their importance in the minds of serious men and women. Perhaps it is well that those of us who are not too actively involved in this latest suicide pact of civilised mankind should, so far as possible, keep our minds occupied with matters that in normal times are the concern of sensible and decent people everywhere. I have the good luck to belong to a profession, the recognised duty of which is the same in peacetime as in wartime. That duty is to apply all the knowledge and skill we possess to the saving of life and the relief of pain. It is not for us to say whether those in need of our help are "friends" or "enemies," whether their lives are worthy or unworthy of salvation, or whether their illness or wounds are merited or undeserved.

I have been reading a recently published book dealing with "Crime in England Between the Wars."* The author, Dr. Mannheim, is the Lecturer in Criminology at the London School of Economics, and he deals critically and illuminatingly with the social aspects of crime and its causation. It is a book for the serious student rather than for "the general reader"; so many of the official statistics which he presents and analyses being quoted only that they may be dismissed as of little significance.

If we are to consider seriously the problems of crime and punishment, it is obviously necessary for us first to get a clear idea as to what crime is—which for most of us will mean getting rid of a lot of prejudices and conventional views—and, secondly, to do our best to find out why some people are classed as criminals and others not. A criminal is not the same thing as a wicked man. An individual may be both; but there are plenty of criminals whom few of us, on reflection, would characterise as bad men; and many people whom most of us would consider wicked yet are not criminals. The essence of crime is not sin, but the breaking of the laws of one's country; and, if all were known, I doubt if many would fall outside the criminal category.

When a criminal is caught, we punish him. Why do we do this? If a man strikes us, most of us instinctively and without reflection strike back. But the punishment which the law serves out to crime has not this simple character. The magistrate or the judge has received no individual injury at the hands of the offender brought before him, nor does he impose a penalty on the spur of the moment, without reflection. There are two distinct notions of the purpose and nature of just punishment. In the bottom of his heart the average person feels that a man deserves to be done by as he has done; and the intensity of this belief varies with what seems to him the foulness of the particular crime. This attitude does not differ much from the ancient Mosaic "An eye for an eye: a tooth for a tooth." More thoughtful people, however, have come to see that human nature is not entirely uniform, and that for our acts and thoughts we are not entirely responsible. Our heredity and the circumstances of our life are largely outside our individual control; and it is these things, as well as the use which we make of such freedom as we possess, that determine our deeds and our motives. Theoretically the purpose of law and justice is the preservation of the society in which we live and have our being; and only those things should be considered crimes punishable by law which are thought to tend to the disruption or damage of this society, and punishment should be inflicted only for the purpose of deterring from crime.

In recent years an increasing concern has been felt in humanitarian circles for the personal welfare of the criminal himself. Our prison population is largely composed of men and women who have been there before—often a great many times. The punishment they have suffered has certainly not succeeded in deterring them from repeating the offence, whatever effect it may have on other people. In his book, Dr. Mannheim presents some interesting statistical material on recidivism. He has collected and analysed the facts relating to 1,197 men and 77 women for the twenty years 1915–35. Only cases with at least four convictions are dealt with. In nearly all these cases of recidivism, an outstanding fact is the shortness of the intervals between discharge from prison and subsequent conviction of a fresh crime. Even intervals of two to five years duration are not common; and Dr. Mannheim draws attention to the large number of cases in which an accumulation of long terms of penal servitude or imprisonment apparently had not the slightest effect as a deterrent so far as these individuals were concerned. Here are a few examples from a long list which he quotes:

Within 31 years 30 years served in 8 sentences.
Within 26 years 24 years served in 10 sentences.

* *Social Aspects of Crime in England Between the Wars.* By Hermann Mannheim. George Allen and Unwin. 18s.

Within 23 years 19 years served in 6 sentences.
Within 20 years 19 years served in 5 sentences.
Within 26 years 20 years served in 6 sentences.
Within 22 years 20 years served in 5 sentences.

These, obviously, are people on whom imprisonment has failed to exercise either a deterrent or a reformative effect; but they cannot be taken as demonstrating the ineffectiveness of imprisonment as a deterrent on non-recidivists, or on the thousands, or millions, of individuals who avoid crime mainly through fear of imprisonment and the disgrace and economic troubles which it brings.

One is naturally curious to learn when these habitual criminals began their unlawful careers, and in what way their observable circumstances differed from those of their law-abiding fellow-citizens. Here we come up against one of the obvious uncertainties of criminological statistics. The first conviction is probably nearly always a far later event than the committal of the first crime; but as to the latter, we have no official figures. Dr. Mannheim, from an examination of the Calendar, gives us some facts as to the ages of 711 recidivist men and 45 women at the time of their first conviction. Nearly 60 per cent. of the lot were first convicted before they reached the age of twenty-two, and over 13 per cent. of the men before they were fourteen. Very few embarked on their criminal careers after the age of forty. As to the offences of habitual criminals, the overwhelming majority are crimes against property. Thus, out of 1,900 convictions, over 900 came under the head of Larceny, 335 under Burglary, and 219 under False Pretences and Fraud. The available statistics lend small encouragement to those sentimentalists who argue that the main purpose of prisons should be to reform prisoners. Experience shows that by the time a young man or a young woman is landed in prison, the point of view is too fixed to be easily rectified by a mixture of severity and kindliness.

A careful analysis has been made of the probable causes of juvenile delinquency. Dr. Mannheim concludes that poverty lies at the bottom of the great majority of the cases. "It may be the ultimate cause of physical defects and educational backwardness as well as of family quarrels, of the premature death of a parent, of bad housing conditions or unsuitable employment." In the table of immediate probable causes the two items that stand out, so far as boys are concerned, are "Home Conditions in General" 133, and "Unemployment" 108, whilst "Mental Disorder and Mental Inferiority" are believed to be the probable cause of delinquency in 144 cases. The figures for the girls are somewhat different. "Home Conditions" still top the list with 75 cases, whilst "Mental Disorder and Mental Inferiority" are held to be responsible for 58; but to "Unemployment," only 5 cases are held to be attributable. As to "Sexual Offences," "Girls, and Male Prostitution" are to be found to account for only 13 cases out of the 606 boys; whereas, "Female Prostitution, Immoral Tendencies apart from Prostitution, and Influence of Man" are thought to be the prime causes of 69 cases of delinquency out of the 411 girls.

The statistics confirm the conclusion that poverty is the basic cause of many petty crimes and of not a few larger crimes; but even were poverty abolished, the problem of more serious crimes would remain. An outstanding characteristic of grave criminality is a deficiency of social feeling and impulse in the offenders; but, nine times out of ten, I think that this deficiency will be found traceable, not to any inherent defect, but to the faulty notions and egoistic habits of those with whom, as a child, the criminal came most intimately into contact. Not only our economic system but also our educational system and our family conventions are hopelessly on the wrong track. We all of us start with a strong natural urge to action and to self-expression. Unless we are given opportunity and encouragement to satisfy this urge along legitimate and socially desirable channels, it will flow into illegitimate and socially undesirable ones. A complicated industrial community, such as ours, cannot be healthily carried on without common rules. The most effective measures for the prevention of crime consist in the provision of alternative outlets for creative activity and self-expression, and the cultivation of the spirit of social loyalty and camaraderie.

Human life is one of continuous compromise and expediency. We all have to do lots of things that our inclinations and our idealistic dreams would have us avoid. We need to bear all this in mind if we are going to consider these questions of crime and punishment soberly and intelligently. Even in the relatively abstract sphere of morality, notions of right and wrong vary from country to country and from age to age. Acts which were regarded by everyone as laudable or, at worst, indifferent, not so very many hundred years ago, are to-day almost universally looked upon as loathsome crimes. The converse is about equally true. Even if we take the extreme determinist view that no man, being what he is, can act in given circumstances other than he does, expediency still compels us, where possible, to alter the circumstances. Those whose egoism dangerously outweighs the impulse of camaraderie, fair-play and pity, must be deterred, out of care for their own skins, purses or liberty, from creating social disharmony. Consideration for social well-being, therefore, must principally determine both the making and the administration of our laws; but, in the progressive humanisation of our laws and our penal code, let us do everything possible to make law-abiding both easy and reasonable; and, so long as we do not unduly weaken its deterrent value, let us in our punishment bear in mind that the greatest criminal has a spirit to save, and, within the limits of the practicable, a life to live.

Finally, let us beware of undue alterocentricity. *Committunt eadem diverso crimina fato: Ille crucem sceleris pretium tulit, hic diadema.* Which, so far as most of us are concerned, should be translated: There, but for the Grace of God, go I.

HARRY ROBERTS

HAPPINESS AGAIN

SOME one, commenting on the death of Baden-Powell, said that he had probably made as many human beings happy as any man of our time. The farewell messages that were found among his papers last week are the messages of an old soldier who believed that it was one of the chief duties of man to try to make other people happy. "The most worth-while thing," runs one sentence, "is to try and put a bit of happiness into the lives of others." A friend of mine—a lover of eighteenth-century prose—exclaimed on reading this: "I never liked the Boy Scout movement. Now I know why. I have no particular objection to happiness, but I cannot believe that any movement is much good in which the organiser uses 'worth-while' as an adjective and says 'try and' where he means 'try to.'" I pointed out that good prose and good morals do not always go together, and reminded him that, according to the scholars, Marcus Aurelius wrote pretty bad Greek. (It was Greek, wasn't it?) He said that that was probably why he had never liked Marcus Aurelius and had always looked on him as a Martin Tupper among emperors. I said I liked Marcus Aurelius very much and that I had often been inspired by him to try to lead a better life and might have succeeded if leading a better life were easier than it is. He said he thought writing better prose was more important than leading a better life. I disagreed vehemently.

In any conflict between the aesthetes and the moralists I usually find myself on the side of the moralists. Not in practice, perhaps, but certainly in theory. I like the idea of making other people happy, and I should like it even if it were propagated in an ungrammatical Somerset dialect. I do not know why more people do not preach it. When some one writes: "It is your duty to make yourself good and other people happy," a chord in my being vibrates responsively, and I feel a better man till I find that there is no mustard in the mustard-pot again. Then something gets entangled with the wheels of goodness, and my progress towards grace is impeded. Still, the thing remains an ideal at the back of my mind. The people I envy most are simple men like the V.C. General who recently revealed in his posthumous reminiscences the fact that every morning he made a resolution neither by word or deed to diminish the happiness of any human being during the day.

My friend says that this is twaddle. He contends that one's own happiness is quite as important as the happiness of other people, and probably more so. "If happiness is such a fine thing," he argues, "why not begin by making yourself happy, as the wisest and less philosophic Epicureans did? Besides, if you set out to try to make other people happy, you will probably end by doing more harm than good. Think of all the spoilt children whose parents worked themselves to the bone to make them happy and who grow up into miserable self-centred neurotics. I was in a house the other day where a grown-up son flew into a rage with his father and, when his father reproached him for his bad temper, calmly replied: 'It's your fault. You spoiled us all and gave us no discipline when we were children. And the result is we have these uncontrollable tempers.' That is what comes of trying to make other people happy. It usually means simply pampering and undermining their characters. I'm not a moralist, but, if I have any moral belief at all, it is that the chief duty of man is to make himself happy and other people good."

Up to a point I agreed with this. There are obviously occasions on which to try to make other people happy would be immoral. A headmaster could no doubt make many of his younger pupils happy—if boys are still what they used to be—by presenting each of them

with a catapult. Many a nurse could bring the light of happiness into an infant's eyes by allowing it to pull the cat's tail. Human beings unfortunately find their happiness in all sorts of uncommendable ways. No one, I think, has yet maintained that it is our duty to make elderly sadists and juvenile gluttons happy. Even a saint would hardly have applauded any one for trying to make Henry VIII or Nero happy. The truth is, most of us believe in trying to make other people happy only if they can be made happy in ways of which we approve. I once knew a man, a stickler for high standards in literature, who refused to buy Horner's Penny Stories for his children, though this would have made them very happy indeed. Be sure he thought he was being cruel only to be kind—an admirable excuse, I have always thought, for thrusting one's own tastes on other people. Many teetotallers used to be like that. They would not make their guests happy by giving them wine because they thought that to be happy drinking wine was to be happy in one of the many wrong ways.

Still, whatever reservations we may make on the subject, most of us remain convinced that it is on the whole a good thing to try to make other people happy. If a poll were taken on the matter Baden-Powell would have at least a 97 per cent. majority. Stylists may shudder at his prose, but it expresses effectively enough what nearly everybody believes. "Happiness," he says in one of his messages to the Scouts, "does not come from being rich nor merely from being successful in your career, nor by self-indulgence. But the real way to get happiness is by giving happiness to other people. Try and leave this world a little better than you found it, and when your turn comes to die you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best." My friend, when I read this passage out to him, said that it affected him with nausea. He said it was like "Keep smiling" and "One good deed a day"—the sort of preaching against which every healthy-minded boy rebelled. "But isn't it true?" I asked him; "True or not," he said, "it's so utterly commonplace." "And what," I asked him, "is the matter with being commonplace? Bread is commonplace, potatoes are commonplace, yet you eat them." "Don't make foolish analogies," he said.

Strange how the hatred of preaching survives in the bosoms of many human beings. The clergyman is forgiven his preaching, for that is his occupation in life, but the layman who affirms in public that it's better being good than bad is lucky if he is not accused of platitudinousness and cant. Perhaps this resentment of lay preaching originated in our early lives when so many of us found preaching a great deal easier than practising. I myself was something of a preacher to the family as a small boy. What a din they would raise as I pointed out some error in their behaviour or some particular in which they might amend their ways. "Preach, preach, pre-e-e-ach!" they would cry, surrounding me with their indignant faces. Yet all I was doing was holding up the banner of the ideal. I could not do it in deeds, but at least I could do it in words. But all the reward I got for my pains was the reputation of being a hypocrite. I cannot remember a single one of the family's having ever benefited by my admonitions.

Since that time I have been chary of preaching. I still want to preach, but as a rule I lack the courage to do so. And, unlike many of my friends, I enjoy preaching in others. I like a line of poetry like Longfellow's "Life is real, life is earnest." I feel that it needed a brave man to write a line like that, and that such a line must do a great many people good. I suspect that at least a little of my pleasure in Browning used to come from his untiring gift for preaching. How the heart rose as one read:

> Be happy, add but the other grace;
> Be good, why want what the angels vaunt?

I admit that the word "vaunt" is bad—as bad as the Greek, if it was Greek, of Marcus Aurelius. But I always felt that I was adding a cubit to my moral stature when I was reading Browning.

Like the Victorian poets, Baden-Powell had the courage to preach. He was indeed one of the few lay preachers left. And he was lucky enough to be able to preach in an original way. In an age in which some people made game of goodness he made goodness a game. He rigged small boys out in costumes that made them look like the heroes of penny dreadfuls and, having done so, gave virtue something of the fascination of the Wild West. Chesterton once said that it was one of the functions of literature to turn truisms into truths; and in his more practical way Baden-Powell revivified for the young truisms about selflessness, cheerfulness and courage. I am too much of a lone wolf ever to have taken kindly to Boy Scouting myself, but I am sure that the movement, organised by the greatest lay preacher of his generation, has immensely increased the happiness of England and that making other people happy is not nearly so repellent or perilous an enterprise as my friend thinks.

Y. Y.

COUNTRY NOTES

Birds in Winter

If we are to have another winter as cruel as the last winter from the point of view of weather, one wonders what effect it will have on the bird population of this country. All observant country-dwellers must have noticed the scarcity of nests and paucity of song in the spring of 1939, and it struck me in particular how few robins were to be seen last autumn. Even in the first days of this year, when the blizzard raged from the north and tits and chaffinches quarrelled over the crumbs, blown sideways even as they tried to peck at the food and at one another, scarcely a robin has come to the table. Other bird-feeders may have had a different experience: I hope so, for I should deplore the disappearance of the robin, that disagreeable little dictator who bullies his own kind but so flatteringly appropriates man as his own friend.

It seems a miracle that the tiny creatures should manage to survive such conditions at all. For what is the life of a bird in winter weather? Exposure such as no man could endure; starvation or semi-starvation for days on end. Starvation is the most serious problem a bird has to cope with. It means not only that the bird goes hungry, but that it loses heat, and heat is essential to its survival. A bird's normal body temperature is far higher than that of a man, say 103 or 104 degrees Fahrenheit, and it can keep itself up to this standard only by the constant and continuous renewal of food. In fact, it has to eat all the time. If it can't find enough to eat, it loses heat and dies.

The smaller the bird, the more proportionately it has to eat, and the more heat it has to keep up, because its body surface area becomes (on a sliding scale) more important in proportion to its weight. It is alarming to think how hard the tiniest birds have to work to find the food which will maintain their warmth and energy.

Anyone aware of these facts hurries and scurries to feed the birds in days of snow. One longs to hang out lumps of suet and coconuts cut in half. One feels apologetic to the birds who in former years have become accustomed to such luxuries. They must be puzzled as to this new miserly behaviour on the part of their friendly British public.

The best we can do for them is to put out crumbs. But crumbs get frozen, and turn rapidly into hard little blocks. One must prevent this from happening, and the best dodge I have discovered is to pack an old coconut-shell tight with bread-crumbs, turning the opening of the shell away from the prevailing wind. On the other hand, if a cupful of milk can be spared, they enjoy pecking at the frozen lump.

Of course there are hard winters and mild winters, and I suppose it may be possible that a prolonged interruption of the bitterest need is responsible for the absence of any countering instinct. Looking back over the statistics of the harshest winters on record, one comes across some surprising gaps. The twelfth century appears to have been distressingly cold; the thirteenth had no remarkable winter at all; the fifteenth got its share; but between 1462 and 1609 (nearly a hundred and fifty years) no exceptionally hard weather is recorded. Then for another hundred years, 1609 to 1708, England escaped again, making up the deficiency in the eighteenth century, when six terrible winters called for comment.

My point is that the century or century and a half of gaps may well have interrupted the development of an inherited instinct. Generations of birds would hatch and die during those periods. The transmission of knowledge would not be continuous. This may be, and I suspect is, a shockingly unscientific theory; and in any case it collapses at once when one reflects that any winter, even a mild one, would be a strain on a bird.

Instinct and Association

The behaviour of birds during air raids has been much discussed. Personally I have failed to observe that birds are in any way affected by the presence of planes, bombs, or gun-fire. Flocks of pigeons, crows, and starlings behave in their normal way. On the other hand, I have observed a definite change of attitude in my dog. The power of association is, I think, interestingly shown. At the beginning of the Blitz last September, when the local siren loosed itself on to the air three or four times a day, she took no notice at all. The sound of planes left her unmoved. Bombs frightened her from the first. Now after four months of raids she associates the siren with planes and bombs. As soon as the siren goes she jumps up, sits with erect ears, listening, clearly connecting the warning with the explosions she has heard in our woods and meadows and villages.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

A NOTE ON JAMES JOYCE

THIS is no time to attempt a critical estimate of Joyce. Wilson's forty pages in *Axel's Castle* (Scribners) has done that best. He has died this week, but it will be a year or two before anything can be said about him which is worth saying. In the next period of expansive leisure, when we can read again and reassess the past, he may well take the place which Henry James has lately occupied, that of the Forerunner in vogue, the fine product of a vanished and alien civilisation which by its completeness and remoteness stirs the imagination and so enters into communication with its successor. Joyce was the last of the Mammoths, not perhaps quite the last, for there is still Gide, Claudel, Vuillard, Bonnard, in France, but I know of none in America and England, and by Mammoths I mean those giant inhabitants of the middle class who believed in life for art's sake, and were prepared to devote sixty or seventy years of unremitting energy and patience, all their time, all their money, all their mind to it. We see them browsing in small herds through the 'sixties and 'seventies and 'eighties, Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, Ivory Tower dwellers, Realists, Parnassians, their food the experience of a lifetime obtained through a giant curiosity, a private income and a deep sense of security, for their protective bourgeois colouring, their rich dark suits and stiff collars, their comfortable homes and devoted women disguise them completely and merge perfectly into the contemporary bourgeois landscape. With the turn of the century the herds thinned out, the feeding grounds deteriorated, the last war had somewhat the effect of an ice age, yet the pastures which had supported Cézanne and Flaubert, Degas and Henry James continued to support Moore and Yeats and Proust, Joyce, Gide, and Valéry. Now most of them are gone and the ice cap is returning with velocity.

Joyce was not a revolutionary. His life contained only one revolutionary gesture, which was his departure from Ireland after the suppression of *Dubliners*, which was to have been brought out in 1904. He produced a fierce poem, *Gas from a Burner*, which contains some excellent hate of Ireland, and left his country never to return. He then taught English in the Berlitz schools, where he was working at Trieste when the last war broke out, after which he moved to Zurich. It is odd to think that there must exist many Italians who learnt their English from this lord of language, who was quietly acquiring every known tongue in his spare time. *Dubliners*, an admirable collection of short stories, was finally published in 1914. It shows Joyce torn between the realism of the "modern movement" and a decadent Celtic romanticism. In 1916 he published *The Portrait of the Artist* through the Egoist Press. It is a quite remarkable book, adult, sensitive, unreassuring, in which the two veins of Dublin realism and Celtic romanticism are woven into an elaborate fugue. After the publication of *Ulysses*, which was due to the courage and devotion of Sylvia Beach, he became, through American benefactions, financially secure, and was able to live the kind of life he wanted, which was that of a well-to-do high priest of art, remote from equals and competitors, and not too accessible to admirers, in a luxurious apartment in the Rue de Grenelle. It was there that I used to go to see him, or else in his room at the American hospital in Neuilly, when I was writing an article on *Ulysses* and *Work in Progress*. I had read *Ulysses* with passion, it is very much a young man's book, packed with the defeatism and the guilt of youth, its loneliness, cynicism, pedantry, and outbursts of bawdy anarchist activity. Guilt about a dying mother, boredom with an actual father, search for a spiritual father, reliance on robuster friends, watery and lecherous cravings for girls, horror and delight in failure, horror and fascination for the gross calm, bitchy, invincible feminine principle as exemplified in Molly Bloom, "Queen of Calpe's rocky mount, the raven-haired daughter of Tweedie"; it was like, and always will be, nothing one has read before.

At that time there was a complete cult of *Ulysses*. Books were written about it. Stuart Gilbert provided a fascinating crib, there was a map of Dublin with the journeyings of Bloom and Stephen in different coloured inks, and on "Bloom's Day" (June 16th) there was a celebration, Joyce going to the country with a few friends and admirers for a picnic, one of which was ruined by a clap of thunder, for which Joyce had a genuine terror. I could not write about *Work in Progress* without having it explained to me and so my talks with Joyce ended up in my being put on to construe. "Now, Mr. Connolly, just read this passage aloud and tell me what you think it means." "It's about the Danish walls of the original Danish encampment—er—I mean Dub-b-lin—the black ford? Ford of the oxen? Hill on a fort?" "No, no, no—I refer to the three cathedrals of Dublin, Mr. Connolly, the only city, you know, to have three cathedrals." It was not quite like being at school, it was like going to breakfast, after one had left school, with one's schoolmaster. In theory you were grown up, in practice you weren't. After one difficult passage about Roman Dublin intoned by Joyce in his magnificent voice, he paused. "You know, of course, to what I refer, Mr. Connolly?" "No, not exactly." "I refer"—there was a moment of acute embarrassment—"I refer to a Lupanar." After the tutorials he would go to the piano and sing Dublin street ballads with a charming, drawling, nasal parody of the old itinerant singers. He talked endlessly about Ireland. "I am afraid I am more interested, Mr. Connolly, in the Dublin street names than in the riddle of the Universe." He was even interested in Irish cricket, and always, when I knew him, wore the white blazer of an obscure Dublin club. He was very proud of his family, and like all the Anglo-Irish, a snob. In Paris he liked good food, especially a Montparnasse restaurant called the *Trianon*, and going to the opera, and order and wealth. Sometimes, however, he went out with Hemingway or Lewis and got drunk. He always seemed to be two men, the legendary Joyce, blind but patient, pompous, cold, easily offended, unapproachable, waiting to be spoken to, with a strange priestly blend of offended dignity, weakness and intellectual power, and underneath the warm, sympathetic bawdy Irish character. In the years to come something really important could be written about him. Revolutionary in technique, yet conservative in everything else, so deadly respectable in his life, so fearlessly sensual in his writings, so tortured with the lapsed Catholic's guilt—the "*Agenbite of Inwit*," so obsessed with his own youth that his clock seemed literally to have stopped on June 16th, 1904, and yet so determined to create a mythical universe of his own. We will never have the time, the security or the patience in our lifetime to write like him, his weapons "silence, exile and cunning" are not ours. I hope, but only for the time, to read through him and one day make a study of this literary anti-Pope, this last great mammoth out of whose tusks so many smaller egoists have carved their self-important ivory towers.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

OTHER TIMES, OTHER MANNERS

["A phenomenal haul of Fascist generals have been taken in Greece, Albania, Libya and the Western Desert." News Item.]

WHEN fortune on the battlefield
Deserts the generalissimo
Obliging him perforce to yield
His State and country to the foe,
His people (if upon the Continent)
Immediately elect him President.

But when Great Britain's generals meet
Reverses they do not expect
The consequences of defeat
Inexorably take effect.
(In circumstances of extreme disgrace
A Peerage usually meets the case.)

While by the ancient Roman code,
When fickle fortune waved farewell,
According to the Stoic mode
Commanders in the battle fell,
Or with the utmost promptness afterwards,
Discreetly threw themselves upon their swords.

But Roman generals of our time
Although they have adopted much
Heroic, ancient, and sublime,
Relinquishing the crowning touch,
No longer with this venerable right
Mop themselves up when capture is in sight.

So whereas in the wars antique
The conquering chiefs and general staffs
Had only to select and speak
A few well-chosen epitaphs,
They now have army corps and High Commands,
With marmalades of generals on their hands.

High fascists have not given out
Why they should let this custom drop,
But there is not the slightest doubt
They wait example from the top,
And when the fascist dog has had his day
Much may be said for the old Roman way.

SAGITTARIUS

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Brigham Young," at the Regal
"Spellbound," at the London Pavilion

Both these films touch controversy. In *Brigham Young* it is plurality of wives, a subject still needing, and getting here, "delicate treatment"; in *Spellbound* it is spiritualism. *Spellbound* goes boldly for its theme and succeeded in being banned, until Mr. Swaffer, looking remarkably like Mr. Swaffer, stepped in with a prologue to say that spiritualists could take it. Of the two, *Brigham Young*, with its rough saints and hints of a modern Exodus, is the better film. It keeps to the lines set out in Hollywood's D.N.B. Early persecution, an interminable crawl across a continent, jolting wagons, staggering oxen, dying pilgrims, the division between those who see milk and honey beyond the mountains and those who would prefer Californian gold, fiery speeches and grim determination from Brigham Young. (Dean Jagger is the Tracy of this trek). "Go out and catch rabbits," shouts Brigham to his hungry following, "and let 'em breed like saints." But this is one of the very few references to an Old Testament longing that has made the sect famous. Pictorially, the film is admirable, and there is a miracle inthe form of a plague of crickets, devoured by almost as many seagulls.

For the first quarter of an hour of *Spellbound* the quality of acting and setting was so English—so muted and tacitly well-bred—that one wondered whether this was the result of unusual subtlety or of unusually dumb direction. The characters (country-house class) unfreeze with difficulty, finding it easier to stroke horses than talk to each other, and substituting violent games of tennis for making love; but this Englishness thaws a little when spiritualism stalks on the scene. A wealthy young man, brooding over the death of his sweetheart in the village, comes under its spell; trances are followed by materialisation, and the young man's mind goes to pieces. A girl in his own class brings him round, and this moral together with a "Love only can cast out fear" ends the story. But the seances provide something new in films; and it is a pity that this realism should be marred by the argument that such manifestations are due to "evil spirits."

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, January 18th—

V. S. Pritchett: "The Short Story," Dick Sheppard Centre, 52 Queensway, 2.30. Admission 1s., including tea.

"La Serva Padrona," opera by G. B. Pergolesi, Free German League of Culture, 36a Upper Park Road, N.W.3, 3.

SUNDAY, January 19th—

Prof. G. W. Keeton: "China's Struggle for Freedom," Conway Hall, 11.

Workers' Educational Association One-Day School, 12 Great Newport Street. Sessions at 11 and 2.15. Particulars from MUS. 5570.

MONDAY, January 20th—

Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch, O. M. Green: "Japan's Imperial Army," 12 Great Newport Street, 1.

"Dear Brutus," Globe.

TUESDAY, January 21st—

Miss B. Bliss: "The Welfare of Industrial Workers," Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 1.

Prof. Gilbert Murray: "Hellenism," Royal Institution, 2.30.

WEDNESDAY, January 22nd—

Fabian Society Lunch. Speaker: Jan Masaryk. Royal Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, 1. Tickets, 2s. 9d., 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.

M. Arthur Wauters: "Montaigne et la Politique," Institut Francais, 3.

THURSDAY, January 23rd—

Dr. N. Pevsner: "The Classical Revival, 1760–1820," Courtauld Institute of Art, 1.15.

FRIDAY, January 24th—

M. Denis Saurat: "La France Libre et la situation actuelle," Institut Francais, 3. Tous les vendredis au 21 mars.

Correspondence

STATE MEDICAL SERVICE

SIR,—The arguments for a State Medical Service are so overwhelming that we must recognise that it is only the reactionary outlook of the B.M.A. and the vested interests of the more affluent private practitioners which prevents the introduction of such a system now.

The growth and development of the Public Medical Services will bring about a steady increase in the number of salaried medical men while the Municipalisation or Nationalisation of our hospital system (which is bound to come soon as a result of the now apparent bankruptcy of the charitable organisations) will bring over to the State another influential section of the profession. We must recognise, however, that the backbone of the present system is still the family practitioner and that the most difficult tasks of the reformers, if no revolutionary changes are possible, will be the conversion of this most numerous group to the need for State control.

All young medical men would like to continue their studies after graduation with a view to specialisation but without unlimited capital this is impossible and the student is forced immediately into private practice. The very nature of the work forces all but the most strong-willed early into a groove and before long the would-be specialist, weighed down by the responsibilities of family life, becomes the slave of his practice's "goodwill." It is essential, therefore, that if we are to influence the great majority of the profession with the new ideas we must offer them the opportunity of post-graduate studies and specialisation. This can best be done by a complete break with the idea of the family practitioner as the unit of organisation and the substitution of the clinic, with its specialisation and co-operation.

There is one institution in existence within the present system which could, in my opinion, carry out the necessary experiments along these lines now. I refer to the co-operative movement. Already one subsidiary company of the movement is giving dental treatment to tens of thousands of Co-operators throughout the country and I think all who have come in contact with it will admit that while the organisation is not by any means perfect, the experiment has been a great success.

A Co-operative Medical Service on these lines, in which the staff would be no longer dependent on the profit from the cough bottle for a livelihood, but would be allowed full scope for their abilities, and where the great financial resources of the movement would make possible to the members all the benefits of modern medical practice, while not the answer to our problem, would, I am convinced, take us a long way towards our objective.

69 High Street, Birmingham, 4. JOHN BAIRD

SIR,—I think it only fair to give my experience as doctor attending one of the Tube shelters, in view of the account given by Mr. Ritchie Calder in your issue of January 4th of his impressions of medical work in shelters. I am on the salaried basis described by Mr. Calder, and I attend nightly for one week in four. The First Aid Post opens at 6.30. It is attended by a fully trained nurse and two V.A.D.s, who are there all night and who know the shelterers well. They make frequent tours of the shelter, speaking to the different groups, and they make a note of anyone they think should see the doctor. In addition, people come to the F.A.P. on their own initiative, or at the suggestion of their neighbours, the A.R.P. warden or the shelter marshals, whom we find most helpful and co-operative in our work.

The doctor arrives at about 8.30 and the cases are asked in turn to come and be seen; appropriate treatment is ordered to be given on the spot, and the patients advised to attend their own doctor in the morning. This latter instruction is generally welcomed by the patients, whether private or panel, for the simple reason that most people value their own doctor's knowledge and experience of their past medical history and idiosyncrasies. The question of fees had not even occurred to me personally. It is merely a question of medical common sense. So far as the question of fomentations is concerned, these we do nightly for any condition requiring such treatment, and if a whitlow or boil comes suddenly to a head it is lanced and dressed in our F.A.P. As for drugs, we are by no means "strictly limited to palliatives of the aspirin, sal volatile, cough-mixture and gargle variety," but have a good and reasonable selection for use in such emergencies as asthma, angina pectoris and various other conditions.

After the doctor leaves the shelter, he or she is on call through the night for any emergency, and is sent for at once by the nurse. The interpretation of our duties is rightly left to us, for each case must be treated on its medical and social merits, which can only be assessed by the man on the spot.

Mr. Calder raises the question: "Are the doctors giving the service for which they draw their panel fees?" The answer is difficult, for it is unfair to generalise from the limited knowledge we each have of our own district. But I do know of numbers of doctors who have altered their hours to suit black-out conditions, many of them having Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning surgeries to enable patients to come for treatment. Like all professions, we have our black and our white sheep, the greater number of us being, no doubt, particoloured. But on the other hand, if we are such a fee-seeking, commercialised section of the community as portrayed by Mr. Calder, the fact of our being employed by a State Medical Service, instead of by the individual patient or under the National Health Insurance Scheme will not change us from goats to sheep. Bureaucracy in England has not always attracted the most disinterested generous-minded individuals to its service, and I am not convinced that State Medicine would produce selfless devotion from doctors.

But so far as the immediate point at issue is concerned—in the medical work in shelters—I think it only right to give publicity to a scheme which reflects credit on the public authorities who are sponsoring it, and on the greater number of nurses and doctors who are carrying it out.

May I say in conclusion how greatly I personally have appreciated the terribly vivid and most sympathetic accounts Mr. Calder has given of the East End bombing, and of the appalling conditions in the shelters?

16 Drayton Gardens, S.W.10. A. E. BERYL HARDING

SIR,—I have read the two articles by Ritchie Calder on State Medical Service with interest and not a little irritation. I believe that this service must come and that it is wrong that the degree of medical skill available to anyone should be determined by the depth of their pockets, but would suggest that Mr. Calder has not got all his facts quite straight, and perhaps may be permitted to reply under the following headings:

(*a*) It is not doing his cause any good to indulge in criticisms of doctors, because it is admitted that in this country the standard of general medical practice is higher than any other, and also I am quite sure that there is no other section of the community that, as a whole, works harder for its financial rewards. No one, unless they were keen on their job, would put up with the hours and all the unreasonableness of sick folk.

(*b*) Doctors have in increasingly large numbers, before this war, recognised the need for a State Service and welcomed the possibility of the change; whether the general public will welcome it when it arrives is another matter, and it is a matter for speculation whether individuality can be given scope in a salaried Government service with its inevitable increase of forms to fill in, etc.

(*c*) The problem of "pulse-holding" of hypochondriacs will not be solved by this measure; these patients abound among all classes, as distinct from genuine neurotics.

(*d*) Panel patients are not "sold like sheep." When a practice changes hands the patients are notified and it is made clear that they are free to go to any doctor. In wartime, too, panel patients are free to change; as for the provision that they are to be "handed back" after the war, surely it is not too much to expect for a man returning from the service of his country that he should be given an opportunity to re-establish himself with his former patients.

(*e*) As a doctor in a reception area, I can refute the statement that the what-we-have-we-hold attitude exists. I have been trying for weeks to get a man to help me, without success, and in any case a large part of the work is unpaid because many people are without any but the slenderest means: further, the fees supposed to be paid by

the Government for the treatment of unaccompanied children are coming in in very small driblets.

(*f*) If you are going to have a State Medical Service you must revolutionise medical training. In my view it is unfair to expect a man to spend anything from five to eight years learning his job, and his parents to deny themselves, as mine did, and then fix his salary at a low level. If you are going to hand-pick your medical students of the future and the State is then going to pay for their training, that is another matter.

(*g*) If medicine is to be a State service then education must be also. At present I think that it is true that if you wish to give your child an enlightened education it costs money, and that a training in democratic ideals and good citizenship is not afforded at secondary and elementary schools, however good the technical training may be.

I would suggest that the creation of a good State Medical Service is a very complicated problem, and that merely slanging doctors and giving them less money will not entirely solve this.

Ilfracombe. T. R. CRABTREE, F.R.C.S.

SIR,—No better evidence of medical chauvinism, of the attitude of "my profession, right or wrong," is needed than Dr. C. Anderson's letter in last week's issue. Some members of the profession—and I hope a small minority—are quick to resent any criticism by laymen of the doctors in general and the general practitioner in particular. May I point out, very firmly, that the profession has maintained that medical practice is a "contract between the doctor and the patient" (although as Sinclair-Loutit and Shirlaw pointed out in *The Lancet*, that is no longer valid)? I and every other layman are partners to that contract and have a right to scrutinise its terms. We are at perfect liberty to criticise and to demand a better contract and better performance of it. That is what I am doing.

His attitude is understandable but scarcely justifiable. I feel the same when journalists are attacked for abusing their function and intruding upon private grief, etc. I do not like either myself or the majority of my colleagues being classed with the offenders. But I do not pretend that it does not happen or that they should not be publicly condemned or that we should not use the exposure of them to strengthen the higher principles of our profession and the Code of Honour established by the National Union of Journalists.

Similarly, I should have expected that doctors would have been quick to condemn any shortcomings of colleagues, whether in shelters or anywhere else, who failed in their duty to the public at this time.

If his "snobbish veneration of Harley Street" is a dig at me, it is a wrong diagnosis. I have had, in the past, a lot to say about Harley Street, but I shall not repeat because "De mortuis nil nisi bonum." If the legend of Harley Street has survived this war, I'm a Dutchman.

May I point out that, as a layman, I have studied, not medicine, but medical practice for a great many years and that—What impertinence!—I wrote, with the co-operation of four members of the General Medical Council, a book on medical science to help the man in the street to understand what he owed to, and had a right to expect from, the doctors.

It is because I have a high regard for doctors in general and a devout admiration for many that I want them to get a square deal and a chance to give us not the Sickness Service we have at present but a real Health Service. RITCHIE CALDER

"THE GOOD GERMANS"

SIR,—A good deal of feeling, for and against, has been aroused by Sir Robert Vansittart's broadcasts on the question of "good and bad Germans" as well as by a subsequent letter to the *Sunday Times* in which the veteran Belgian Socialist, Camille Huysmans, former Mayor of Antwerp, came out in support of Sir Robert. As for Socialists, they would be well advised to look for guidance on this matter to the admirable declarations of the British Labour Party—the section of its Peace Declaration addressed to the German people—which, as far as I know, have never been repudiated. But there is another point. How are the "good Germans" to assert themselves? Obviously by turning on the bad ones and stamping out old bad Germany, root and branch. This means that the good Germans, the genuine opponents of Hitlerism, must be given a chance to undertake and accomplish a thorough clean-up. This will not be a pleasant affair; it will mean a good deal of ruthlessness and bloodshed. It will mean punishing the Nazis severely and at the same time keeping in check their Stalinist associates. It will mean dealing roughly with generals, big business, big landed property, with the social foundations on which the power of Hitler as well as "eternal bad Germany" were built—yes, and it will mean expropriating and, may be, suppressing some friends of Herr Thyssen and Herr Rauschning. Now, will Sir Robert and the other accusers of bad Germany stand that? Will they give the good Germans their chance to make a clean sweep of social conditions which bred dictatorship and war? Or will Conservatives be horrified at "the Red rabble" attacking the sacred pillars of society—as they were over Spain? Will they once more shield German Conservatives, those nice, well-bred, educated people who, after 1918, climbed into the saddle again and then handed the reins over to the Nazi gangsters? This seems to me the real issue: Will the good Germans not be stopped when it comes to putting down, in Germany, the opposite numbers of good British gentlemen?

London, N.W.3. OSCAR PAUL

AMATEUR COMMUNIQUÉ

SIR,—Your article "Amateur Communiqué," contributed by a correspondent, began by asking why so many feel irritated, resigned, apathetic or bored on hearing the words "Air Ministry Communiqué," and from that surprising beginning went on to make an attack on the department concerned in issuing these communiqués and on the directorate of Public Relations at the Air Ministry "expensively reorganised out of the more honestly named Press and Publicity Branch."

Your correspondent tells us rightly that the preparation of official communiqués and censorship is the function of A.I.6. A few lines further down he angrily exclaims: "For some reason or other A.I.6 appear to have been given control over the issue of news from the Air Ministry."

And the gist of his attack turns out to be on its personnel. He complains that its work is entrusted to a K.C. with the rank of Wing Commander and that his staff was not recruited from professional journalists. The whole article indeed reads very like a lament for the old Press and Publicity Branch which *was* staffed by Fleet Street journalists.

For six months I was in daily contact with the work of A.I.6 and with those serving officers in it, who cannot make any reply to criticism even if they thought it worth their while to do so. Even in those early days theirs was work demanding the highest gifts of intelligence, quickness of mind, and memory. It is work which needs training, particularly in all the implications of words and phrases. Often a trivial fact, put in as local colour, would convey information to the enemy which might have disastrous results.

Caution, quickness and verbal accuracy are certainly as often to be met with among brilliant lawyers as among Fleet Street reporters. But whatever their occupation in civil life, the officers of A.I.6 were, and are, careful, brilliant and very hardly worked men. Promotion among them has been earned by merit and devotion to duty.

But is the assumption of the writer of your article that Air Ministry communiqués are dull and that they are badly written true? To me they seem clear and plain statements of fact, as they ought to be. I know that I can rely upon their accuracy. For these reasons they are in marked contrast to the mixture of sensationalism, sentimentality, error and downright lying which the trained journalists of Fleet Street pour out in the newspapers about the work and resources of the Royal Air Force. I make this judgment as a professional writer, though I have the honour to sign myself,

DAVID GARNETT,
Late Flight Lieutenant,
R.A.F.V.R.

EDUCATION TO-DAY

SIR,—May I suggest that Mr. Joad's article on "Education To-day," in your issue of December 28th is, to say the least of it, decidedly misleading. I gather that he is judging the condition of education in London by the situation extant in the L.C.C. area. Mr. Joad apparently forgets the existence of such boroughs as West Ham, East Ham, Leyton, and Barking, all of which are now, for various reasons, far in advance, educationally, of the L.C.C.

In the borough in which I work, teaching, in private houses and halls with adequate shelter accommodation, was started as early as October, 1939, and by Christmas of last year most of our children were attending school at least half a day. When the Blitz forced us to close we were working full time and the schools were as normal as possible. On November 26th those buildings which were undamaged were again opened, and we are now working five days a week, from 10 to 3.30. Grading is not so selective as in pre-war days, but classes are smaller, and the children do receive individual attention. Work is continued in air-raid shelters, even without desks, ink, and sufficient light to read, for most teachers have heard of speech-training and singing, to say nothing of spelling bees and other oral tests of knowledge; and a staff which talks at one end of a shelter, whilst the bored and restless children whom it cannot control play at the other, must, surely, exist only in Mr. Joad's imagination.

The position in the reception areas is, too, I believe, better than the article suggests. I have not Mr. Joad's opportunities for obtaining information, but am convinced that any lack of books or teachers is inexcusable, as adequate numbers of both are available. A. C. T.

HOSTELS

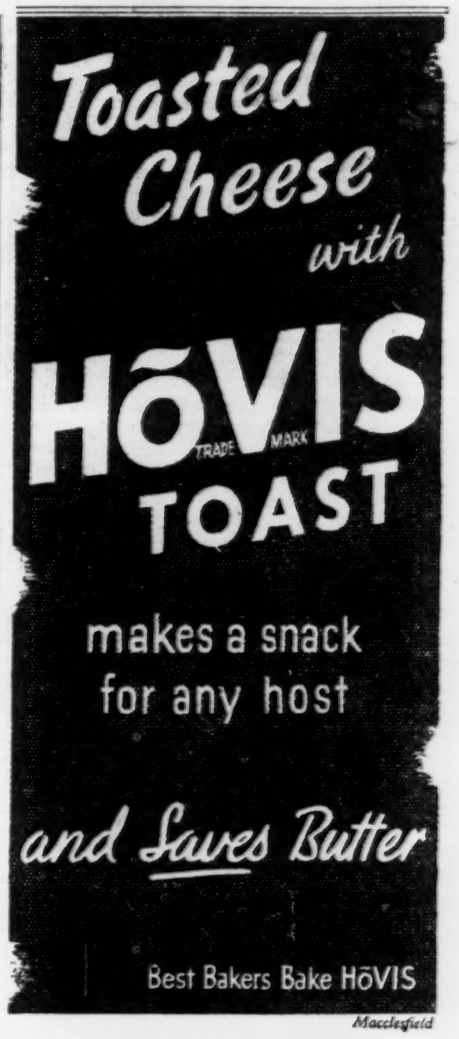
SIR,—We have started two hostels for London evacuees. The first one is for forty children and is run as a resident nursery school for children from two to five. The second is a hostel for mothers with new-born babies and any toddlers they may have. This is run as a residential infant welfare centre with a nursery school attached for the toddlers.

We cannot buy sufficient prams and cots, and we should be extremely grateful if any of your readers would give us any folding push-chairs, prams, play-pens, Harrington squares, any educational toys they may happen to possess.

We should be very grateful if any gifts could be put on passenger train addressed to me at the address below and sent to Pembridge Station, Herefordshire.

MARY PRIESTLEY
(Mrs. J. B. Priestley)

Broxwood Court Hostel,
Leominster,
Herefordshire.



Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

In the panorama of English history from the time of the French revolution to the Reform, the huge steam-rolling person of Wm. Cobbett stands out among his contemporaries like a figure drawn out of scale. There are more sensational, more momentous and more intricate characters in the picture than his, yet as a man he dwarfs them. He is one of Morland's farmers who appears in a Whig drawing-room, twinkling with pleasure at the memory of a good sight of swedes, and hectoring the company with the temper (if not the blasphemy) of an ex-company sergeant-major. Where the rest are historical personages whose minds and actions have made the fate of Europe, Cobbett stands out by the blunt originality of being, simply, a man. Even more, he is a reminder, as we consider the close parallel of his period and his case with our own, of that enormous variant, that untutored political force which gets left out of political theory—human nature.

How close the parallel between Napoleonic times and the present is, must be left to political palmists. Was 1789 our 1917? Was the Treaty of Amiens our Munich, or is it yet to come? With Pitt we fought for the Old Order against the New Order to defeat a foreign imperialist and, in doing so, killed both the Old Order and the immediate possibility of a new one. It came, but after what repression! If the public was united, the intellectuals were not—Hazlitt might be called a fifth columnist—and, as with us to-day, most men actively concerned in politics held equivocal positions. In times of transition people rush to cover their nakedness with what "lesser evils" they can get together, but these, like shirts that are too short, expose regions which are irresistible to the unbenevolent eye of the party enemy. All this is of our time and if a study of the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods does not answer our questions it supplies us with a commentary. Some dates from Wm. Cobbett's life show how near his course may be to ours. He was twenty-six when the Bastille fell, thirty-nine at the Peace of Amiens which he patriotically opposed, fifty-two at Waterloo (by which time he had repented) and—to jump into our future—sixty-nine when the Reform Bill became law.

Taking the long view of Cobbett's life, English writers have thought of him as a survival, a kind of sport in politics, a short-tempered, thick-skinned, likeable John Bull, with honest instincts but muddled ideas. He is the reactionary-revolutionary, a cross between two centuries, a present for Mr. Chesterton. He believes not in the New Dawn, but in the good old times. He is seen as a symbol of the English nature undergoing the martyrdom of being turned from countryman into townsman and shouting to go back and go forward at the same moment. What he hates is the New Order. He hates it as a Radical, not as a Tory; he hates it as an Anarchist hates the Communist and Fascist, the Socialist and the Capitalist, for being the same dogs with different collars.

This is not an untrue reading of Cobbett's career. The proper, attendant irony is that even in his widest radicalism Cobbett did not understand the new industrial working class and, in the end, won Reform not for the poor whom he helped (and lectured), but for the new genteel, the clerk, the shopkeeper, the nineteenth century's David Copperfields whose passion for going up in the world and keeping a servant enraged him. But to think of Cobbett as a survival is nevertheless only half true. Cobbett brings something quite new into English life. He is a new kind of Englishman, as new in his time and as isolated as Defoe was in an earlier century of change. Cobbett was the product of a revolution which had nothing to do with the pros and cons of Jacobinism. He had been touched by the true English revolution, the one which pre-dated the French and took place in America. It is picturesque to see Cobbett as the last John Bull of the eighteenth century; he was really the new John Bull made in the United States.

I have read several *Lives* and portraits of Cobbett—there are G. K. Chesterton's romanticised demagogue, the more instructive biography by Mr. G. D. H. Cole, the long portrait by Hazlitt who, sooner or later in his essays, after innumerable excited generalisations, always gets the idiosyncrasy of his subject; but though all say the American period is "important," none seems to reflect that Cobbett returned to England a peasant and soldier no longer, but an American citizen though he would have killed you if you had told him so.

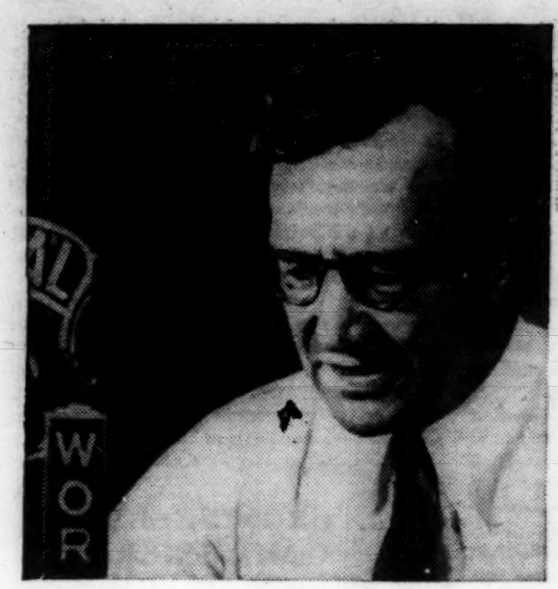
Cobbett attacked emigration on patriotic and economic grounds: he returned from the United States the complete, emancipated emigrant. He had experienced for many years, liberty, equality and fraternity—well, perhaps not fraternity. He had made money. He had left England, an insubordinate sergeant-major, the self-taught know-all and ruler of the regiment who had been diddled by the War Office; he returned free of the English caste system, established as a journalist and business man. Cobbett advocated frugality, the bleak habits of a set peasant life; yet his financial history, his speculative instinct, the huge "indemnity" he asked for—it was £10,000—when at the end of his days he was asked to stand for Oldham, have a transatlantic air. And in America there was relative abundance, there was opportunity, there was space. The famous description of Nova Scotia in *Advice to a Young Man*, when he is confessing to his second love affair, indicates his feeling for the country, but is a picture of his ideal country life. Dying in England, in America it had room to live in. From hard abstract thinking the English reformers and early socialists had laid it down that a man's labour was property; Cobbett in America, untrained in abstract thought, had seen this to be true with his eyes. The emigrant's labour, to the active and industrious, became his property with no squire nor tithe-eating priest to rob him. Independence Cobbett put first among the things that make a good life, and when he wrote of manners he said he wished "every English youth could see those of the United States; always civil, never servile." (If he was never servile, Cobbett was often pretty uncivil.) There is even something very American in another sentence in *Cottage Economy* in the section on How to Keep Geese—his handbooks on gardening and smallholding are not only very readable but really useful—in which, like some dry-voiced Yankee, he says "The reader will be apt to exclaim, as my friends very often do, 'Cobbett's geese are all swans.' Well, better that way than not to be pleased with what one has." It was a typical piece of American showmanship to arrive in England with the bones of Tom Paine—of whom he was not a follower—to propose to take them on a triumphal tour of England—and to drop the whole business suddenly when he saw it was going to be a flop.

Though part of Cobbett seems either to be an essential kind of old Englishman set free or a new kind altogether, Cobbett remained without successors in England. In these times, so like his, is there a contemporary sergeant-major, suddenly promoted over the heads of thirty others, the self-appointed indispensable, quietly teaching himself to write English, writing at the same time a book on how to teach oneself, preparing a case against the War Office, working to expose official corruption? Transition brings out the reactionary-adventurer-revolutionary, the strong-willed egotist: is there now, hotly and wrong-headedly placed in the wrong political party, a Cobbett of the machines, the man who will take his motor bicycle over northern England and note, here, a good piece of boiler making, there, the lost art of making the private wireless set and the craftsmanship of private enterprise, as Cobbett wrote about bee-keeping, swedes and barley? Who will curse the new monopolies, the new taxes, mass-production and emigration once more—a sure post-war movement—and yet mix up this Old Guard stuff with a fierce new radicalism, so that he will be an embarrassment to all political parties and quarrelling with his own on bitter personal grounds. H. G. Wells has foreseen such a type among the *petit bourgeois*. There have been attempts at Cobbettry. Where they have failed is in the element of character. The method can be followed but not the man. The *petit bourgeois* conception of freedom has been imaginative, a fantasy, a dream; it does not spring from the *habit* of liberty, kept loose in the shoulders. It is clever, but it is not practical nor very moral.

What we read of Cobbett to-day—*The Rural Rides*, *Cottage Economy*, the *Grammar of the English Language*, the *Advice to a Young Man*, and, I would like to add because of the war, the excellent *English Garden*, after reading which you seem to feel Cobbett's own hand guiding yours as you hole in your plants—we read, of course, for his character. It is his original achievement not only to have drawn himself well, but to have made the common character of the egotist, of all kinds the least sympathetic to draw, absorbingly attractive. Unlike Montaigne, he is not intensely self-curious; Cobbett takes it for granted that the curiosity is yours, that you will profit by anything he writes about himself. He is always right. His books are the most famous in the world, he has worked harder than any man on earth, he has enormous talents but they did not come from Heaven; on the contrary, will, industry, self-discipline have made them; there is almost a Cobbett method; squeamish authors cannot write while their children yell, but he has written really great works in snatches between nursing and generally looking after a house full of screaming babies; he is an early riser, his good health itself is a virtue due to his sober habits; he takes less time for eating than any other man he knows and for two years had a mutton chop every day for lunch and never got tired of it. Incidentally, he always shaves in cold water.

It is an appalling character; one is not surprised that his sons were mediocrities brought up by such a monster of vehement perfections. And yet his is an altogether charming portrait because it is entirely unselfconscious and without priggishness. He is definite but never censorious. It is the easy portrait, a continual autobiography running through all his books, of a natural man whose greatest experience in his life was the discovery, made by himself, of how to write so that he could pour out the pleasure of having a pugnacious, independent, extravert nature. Robinson Crusoe, the only too practical Crusoe, was a bore with his planks and his nails and his bad conscience; Cobbett's conscience is as good as his health, he conveys to one all the pleasure of the things he has found out for himself. A man like Crusoe is consistent; Cobbett is full of contradictions. An inveterate traveller, he curses the restlessness of the age with the solemnity of a gaffer who has never budged from his own doorstep. Uprooted and risen above his own station, he angrily assures us that the evil of the age lies in the number of people who think themselves risen above their origins. The sublime unconsciousness of it all reduces us to admiration.

It has been said that Cobbett was a bit of a fraud; a plain-spoken man is not necessarily



AMERICAN COMMENTARY

"GOOD EVENING."

Many a Saturday night you have heard these words.

They have been the beginning of a concise, straightforward broadcast of what the war news has meant to the President, the Government, and the people of the U.S.A.

To all of us these broadcasts have been a tonic for war-frayed nerves. Each of them has reviewed the march of events objectively, dispassionately, in a manner devoid of wishful thinking.

In America this soft, calm voice has done as much as anybody's, save President Roosevelt's, to convince America that its destiny is linked with Britain's. In Britain this voice has brought to us comfort and courage, hope and faith in our mission.

The voice is that of RAYMOND GRAM SWING, the outstanding American war commentator, whose analysis of American opinion is the most careful and accurate that it is possible for you to obtain.

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RAYMOND GRAM SWING is now going to talk to the people of Britain *every week*. He is going to tell us of the trend of American opinion and of the efforts that are being made in America on Britain's behalf, and to warn us of the efforts of our enemies in the whole American continent.

He has chosen to speak to the people of Britain each and every Sunday through the columns of the Sunday Express. Each week he will contribute a new and original article. The first will appear on Sunday. Every intelligent Briton will want to read

Raymond Gram Swing
in the
SUNDAY EXPRESS

Unless you are a regular reader it is vitally important that you place an order with your newsagent now for the Sunday Express.

one absolutely given to straight dealing. Cobbett made his peace with authority. He backed down from the full radical programme. He argued for independence but thought the demands of a labourer should be modest. And so on. Men who live in an age like his must continuously find themselves in equivocal positions. They live in the past, present and future at the same time. But there was nothing dubious about his love of his country and I have no doubt that it was the passionate moral feeling of that love which brought his demand for social justice to the hearths of simple people and gave him his enormous influence. The tradition of love of country so often be-glamoured by the learned and debased by the interested or romantic, is stronger the lower we go in the social scale; it is primitive but not irrational and the makers of a new order are wrong to confuse this love with nationalism or decorative patriotism and to think it can just be demonstrated away. V. S. PRITCHETT

TWO GLIMPSES OF THE MOON

Jules Verne. A Biography by KENNETH ALLOTT. *Cresset Press.* 15s.

The worst one can say of this book is that it is not altogether clear for what reason it was written. Ostensibly it is a biography, but it is hard to write the biography of a literary man without making a critical examination of his books, and Mr. Allott does not take Verne's books, in the narrowly literary sense, seriously. Criticism, therefore, tails off into a discussion of the origins of "scientifiction," into what amounts to an "indictment" of the Scientific Age, and into social history which at times has only a tenuous connection with Verne's own life.

Like most writers, Verne was one of those people to whom nothing ever happens. At an early age he made an attempt to run away to sea, only to be ignominiously recaptured after a few hours, and this was, one might say, his last adventure until late in his life a young man with a fancied grievance shot at and wounded him with a revolver. In 1848 Verne tried to visit Paris during the street fighting, but failed to get there because all the trains were full of National Guards. In this incident one can see the justification for Hitler's remark that ability to write marks a man out as unfitted for a life of action. And this and much else in Mr. Allott's book brings out the fact that writers resemble one another much more closely in their private lives than in their writings. Behind the most diverse books there is nearly always the same background, the nerve-racked, dun-haunted figure of the professional writer, paddling about in a dressing-gown in a room full of stale fag-ends and half-empty cups of tea, and struggling with a dreadful book that never gets any further. It seems strange that so unliterary a writer as Verne should have behind him the familiar history of a nineteenth-century Frenchman of letters. But it is all there—the early tragedies in imitation of Racine, the encouragement of Victor Hugo, the romantic starvation in a garret. Not the mistress, however, for Verne was a fairly devout Catholic. It was not till he was in his thirties that Verne began to succeed, though later he was to make stupendous sums, particularly by the dramatised version of *Round the World in Eighty Days.* He did not die till 1905, his life almost exactly spanning the period between the first locomotive and the first aeroplane.

Mr. Allott's main theme is the relation between the cult of Science and the Romantic phase in literature. Although later he was to have misgivings—he was not altogether easy about the theory of evolution, for instance—Verne belongs to the early scientific period, the period of the Great Eastern and the Hyde Park Exhibition of 1851, when the key-phrase was "Command over Nature" rather than, as now, "Mysterious Universe." The mechanical sciences were advancing at tremendous speed and their sinister possibilities were seldom foreseen. Until the invention of the Maxim gun it must have been difficult not to equate scientific invention with progress. One could hardly have a better illustration of the prevailing optimism of the time than the fact that the war of 1870 left Verne almost unaffected. It appeared to him simply as a tiresome interruption, after which one could get on with one's work. The modern wars of extermination had not only not started, but, no doubt, would have been difficult to imagine. Later, however Verne watched with disgust the rise of modern imperialism and the scramble for Africa. One result of this was the disappearance from his books of the sympathetic Englishman. In his earlier work this character appears over and over again—a queer figure, as in most nineteenth-century French novels, given to wearing check suits and breaking long silences with cries of "Hip, hip, hurrah!" but symbolising the pragmatism and inventiveness which Verne admired in the English-speaking races.

It is difficult not to couple Verne's name with that of H. G. Wells, whom Mr. Allott dislikes and goes out of his way to decry. Wells, even more than Verne, has made himself the apostle of Science, but he belongs to a less confident period in which the smallness of man against the background of the spiral nebulae is more obvious than his mastery over Nature. Wells's early romances are less scientific than Verne's—that is, less close to the established knowledge of the time—but there is far more feeling of *wonder* in them. If one compares *A Journey to the Moon* with *The First Men in the Moon,* one sees the advantage, at any rate from a purely literary point of view, of a less anthropocentric standpoint. Verne's story is scientific, or very nearly so. Granted that one could fire a projectile out of the earth's gravitational pull, and that the human beings inside it could survive the shock, the thing might have happened as it is recorded. Wells's story is pure speculation, based on nothing except a predilection for thinking that the moon and the planets are inhabited. But it creates a universe of its own, which one remembers in detail years after reading it. The most memorable incident in Verne's book is the time when the oxygen cylinder sprang a leak and produced symptoms of drunkenness in the explorers—precisely the incident that tethers the story to the earth. In spite of Mr. Allott's efforts, it seems doubtful whether Verne will be read much longer, except by schoolchildren "doing" *A Journey to the Centre of the Earth* as an alternative to *Tartarin of Tarascon.* He set out to combine instruction with entertainment, and he succeeded, but only so long as his scientific theories were more or less up to date. He does, however, enjoy a sort of anonymous immortality because of a controversy that has sprung out of one of his books. In *Round the World in Eighty Days*—itself based, as Mr. Allott points out, on a short story of Poe's—he makes play with the fact that if one travels round the world eastward one gains a day in the passage. And this has given rise to the question, "What will happen when an aeroplane can fly round the world in twenty-four hours?", which is much debated by imaginative boys, readers of the *Wizard* and the *Hotspur,* who have probably never heard Verne's name. This is an interesting book, in spite of its tendency to stray too far from its subject. Some of the illustrations are pleasing, but the captions underneath them are inexcusable.

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A CROMWELLIAN COMMUNIST

Left-wing Democracy in the English Civil War. By DAVID W. PETEGORSKY. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

Of all the gaps that yawn in the writing of English history, perhaps the strangest is the lack of any adequate account of the radical movements of the Civil War. Never has this nation lived more intensely than in this period. Men's minds were stimulated to a swifter and keener intellectual effort than ever before, and there emerges from the struggles of this period a gallery of portraits in which English character reaches the summits of its capacity. To the leaders and the ideas of the main stream of tendency the classical Liberal historians have done full justice. But their sympathy and comprehension halted when they approached the Levellers, while in the Diggers they could see only a pathetic outbreak of eccentricity. Among them all Dr. Gooch alone escapes this reproach. The only book on the Levellers is by an American scholar, Mr. T. C. Pease, and its quality is not remarkable. Stranger still, no one has yet written a life of Colonel John Lilburne, though he was in his day (as Gardiner notes) the most popular man in England and, in a society where strength of character was not uncommon, perhaps the sturdiest and most self-reliant. His story begins with that memorable scene at Charing Cross, when he stood in the pillory with the blood streaming from his scourged back and addressed the crowd in a speech of triumphant defiance. His record in the Parliamentary army was one of daring exploits and surprising escapes. Much as Marius in his prison cell by his erect carriage successfully intimidated the gaoler sent to slay him, so Lilburne, by his confident logic, was able to persuade a disciplined platoon of the New Model that had been sent to arrest him, to salute him and leave him in peace. But his career of failure was strewn with such triumphs, and London jurymen, when Lords and Commons tried him for his life before them, set him free as the soldiers did. He gathered around him men only a little less remarkable than himself—that Puritan Socrates, William Walwyn, who certainly was a pioneer of tolerant rationalism and probably was, at least in tendency, a communist, with Overton who dared to deny the existence of Heaven and Hell, the witty Martin and many others. What is more, he invented for the Leveller movement for the first time in English public life the organisation of a modern political party, with its social centre, its local branches with subscribing members, its weekly paper and its travelling propagandists who carried its message from the radical Home Counties into the benighted and "malignant" North. The Whigs, when Shaftesbury made a party of them

a generation later, copied the Leveller model, including even its emblem, the sea-green ribbon. But the distinction of this party was that it generalised the Puritan struggle against bishops and kings for liberty of conscience into a battle for the recognition by all of the fundamental rights of the citizen, the *Droits de l'homme*, the civil liberties of a later age, which they sought to make valid even against "the never-ending audacity of elected persons." More than a century before the American founders drew up their charter of the individual's rights in a written Constitution, the Levellers tried to define them in an explicit formulation of the Social Contract, the Agreement of the People, which was to have bound even Parliament for all time. Nor were the Levellers an insignificant minority: they certainly had the rank and file of the New Model behind them, the apprentices and the average men and women of the City and a big following, perhaps a majority in the politically-conscious part of the population of East Anglia and the Home Counties.

So much the classical Liberal historians knew, though for some obscure reason it did not interest them. What no one had yet thoroughly explored was the depth and extent of the economic unrest that gave its force to the mainly political movement of the Levellers. It has been done for us at last in this remarkable little book, a terse and well-written essay, packed with painfully gathered material, by a young American scholar with a Russian name. He has seen, what English Liberals lacked the will to see, the obscure class-struggle that raged in every "steeple-house" and in every regiment of the New Model in the last years of the Civil War and the early years of the Commonwealth. The troopers of Whalley's Horse were thinking of something much more concrete than natural rights when they rebelled: they were land-hungry peasants. Was it really a concern for orthodoxy; was it really a sense of the vital importance of the original tongues for an understanding of the Scriptures, that led Presbyterian divines and City elders to fume against the unlettered mechanics who dared to preach in Brownist and Anabaptist chapels? The pulpit was throughout the period of the Réformation incomparably more important than the pamphlet as a means of propaganda: it formed the average man's mind. The disputes over Church government, so tedious and meaningless to the modern reader, were the typical form that the class war in these centuries assumed. Should bishops speaking for the landed gentry, or learned divines dependent on merchant patrons, or unschooled mechanics voicing the passions of the proletariat address the masses upon social questions? That was the real issue between presbyter, priest and sectary. By his patient study of the controversial literature of the period Mr. Petegorsky has disclosed for us the fears that haunted the newly rich: they felt beneath them the vague upheaval of a formless communist movement. And, as he goes on to demonstrate, their fears were not groundless. There is evidence of the spontaneous working of such a movement in many a petition to Parliament, in more than the customary resistance to the enclosure of common fields and in the rioting that followed high prices and disastrous harvests.

The Diggers voiced, though they failed to organise, this obscure proletarian revolt. Everything else had failed. The constitutional methods of the Levellers, their petitions and their preparations for an election were meaningless after Cromwell's seizure of power. Their followers in the army, who tried what the sword could do, had been crushed with ease at Burford. The Diggers saw but one way out: they would try direct action. Faith in Parliament they could have none, and after serving as trooper and agitator in the New Model, their leader Will Everard had turned pacifist in his disillusion—as Lilburne, who became a Quaker, and many another Cromwellian soldier, later did. Inevitably in this century their communism was busied primarily with the land. They were the disinherited children of the peasants turned into proletarians by the slow process of enclosure that was the biggest shaping fact in the social history of this island between the fifteenth century and the eighteenth. Their gallant adventure when they set to work in April, 1649, to dig and manure the common land on St. George's Hill in Surrey left no lasting trace in history and faded quickly, though they had a few imitators, from the memory of their class.

The Diggers differed in this from the innumerable bands of peasants who struggled, from Ket's day onward, to recover the stolen land, that theirs was not an inarticulate gesture. The intellectual ferment of this age was at work in them: they stated their case in pamphlets and they had among them a writer and thinker of genius, Gerrard Winstanley. He was rediscovered in 1906 by an enthusiastic but untrained explorer, Mr. L. H. Berens: Bernstein saw his significance and so did Dr. Gooch. But this study by Mr. Petegorsky is by far the most competent and authoritative we have yet had. He has unearthed a few fresh facts about him and placed his writings in their correct order, but apart from this scholarly service what we chiefly owe to him is that he has sketched Winstanley's career and development against an adequately painted background and grasped the full meaning and originality of his teaching. The only difficulty in understanding Winstanley is that he is so simple. He uses visual language and concrete Anglo-Saxon words throughout, and it is only when one translates his vivid, homely sentences into the abstract terminology of to-day that one perceives that he has an analytic insight into the structure of a propertied society deeper and surer than any Socialist thinker attained until the nineteenth century.

The traditional communism of the heretical sects was an emotional attitude which justified itself by appealing to the ideal of equality latent in the doctrine of the fatherhood of God and to the practice of the primitive Church. Winstanley boldly cut away this theological basis. He groped after a pantheistic rationalism: he quietly substituted the word "Reason" for God as the principle of a systematic universe and he wrote about "Nature" and the law of self-preservation in terms that remind us of the *élan vital*. He attacks the bibliolatry of all the Protestant churches with startling audacity and perceives as clearly as any Marxist that they used religion and the dogma of an after-life as "opium for the people." His own positive and original contribution was an analysis of the social effects of the institution of private property. He was a little behind his age, as even Babeuf was more than a century later, in considering land as the only form of capital. He traces the private ownership of the means of life to force ("club-law") and presents a summary view of history in which the Norman Conquest figures as the beginning of English slavery. He saw that the ownership of land by the few converted the masses into wage-labourers and proletarians, and that the owning-class appropriated the surplus-value of their labour:

> they have by their subtle imagination and covetous wit got the plain-hearted poor or younger brethren to work for them for small wages and by their work have got a great increase.

Or take this passage:

> No man can be rich but he must be rich either by his own labours or the labours of other men helping him: If a man have no help from his neighbour, he shall never gather an estate of hundreds and thousands a year: If other men help him to work, then are those riches his neighbours' as well as his own; For they be the fruit of other mens' labours as well as his own. But all rich men live at ease, feeding and clothing themselves by the labour of other men and not by their own; which is their shame and not their nobility.

But Winstanley saw much more than this. He was far from sharing the rather naive veneration of the Levellers for the law, for he understood that law is the formal expression of the institutions that reflect the balance of class power in any given society. Finally he saw the psychological effect of property. It turns one man into the slave of another "and thereby the spirit is killed in both." It breeds in the proletarian a sense of his inferiority, so that he "looks upon himself as imperfect and so is dejected in his spirit."

Winstanley in his Digger phase was a pacifist. He would not expropriate the landowners. He asked only that the hiring of labour be forbidden and that landless men should be allowed to till the vacant lands in common; they would soon demonstrate the superiority of organised team work. Poverty was unnecessary and England, he believed, could support ten times her actual population. Experience taught him that the law with force behind it was on the side of property. In his last phase he had modified his pacifism. The maturest of his political works, *The Law of Freedom*, is a half ironical appeal to Cromwell to use his power to establish communism, and his Utopia provides for a citizen militia.

Mr. Petegorsky has done his work of interpretation so well that this reviewer has no fault to find, unless it be to point to two omissions. The book (which ought to have had an index) would have gained something if it had traced the debt Winstanley owed, both in his mystical rationalism and in his communism, to the Family of Love, the English branch of that most seminal of all the heresies of the Reformation, the Anabaptist movement, to which one

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may trace both the revolutionary daring of Münster and the quietism of the Quakers. Rather more serious is the author's failure to notice that all the essentials of Winstanley's Utopia were borrowed from More's. That is true of the economic key of both schemes, the common store-houses, the prohibition of money and internal trade, the system of discipline, the advocacy of toleration, and in the main the enlightened plan of education. Winstanley, however, is behind More in his lack of interest in the arts, his less generous attitude to women and his retention of the *lex talionis*. He is more modern in his exaltation of the physical sciences and in his suggestion of an official gazette to broadcast inventions. Luckily his pupil of the next century could not come before Chancellor More, who would have been puzzled to decide whether to hang him for sedition or burn him alive for heresy. H. N. BRAILSFORD

SCOTTISH POETRY

A Golden Treasury of Scottish Poetry. Selected and edited by HUGH MACDIARMID. *Macmillan.* 8s. 6d.

In a period when the main approaches to poetry have been puritanically ulterior (mobilisation of the Cultural Front) or autarchically purist (poetry *of* the poet *by* the poet and *for* the poet) one tends to turn either to the Old Masters or to unacademic anthologies to be reminded that a poem need be neither a cog in a machine nor a pearl in the head of the Buddha. The New Popular poetry of the younger English poets not being popular and the spontaneity of the Surrealists not being spontaneous and Miss Laura Riding's purity being inviolable but nearly unreadable, it has in the last few years been a delight to meet such anthologies as *The Oxford Book of Light Verse* (Auden), *The Poet's Tongue* (Auden and Garrett), and *The Ages of Man* (the brilliant Shakespeare anthology compiled by George Rylands). Even Yeats' *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, bad as it was, gave us, thanks to the inclusion of certain Irish poets and translators writing in a live ballad tradition, a momentary respite from our dutiful self-consciousness. We can find another such respite in this new anthology of Scottish poetry edited by Mr. MacDiarmid; it deserves to stand beside Mr. Lennox Robinson's *Golden Treasury of Irish Verse* and I mean this as high praise.

But first I should say that in my opinion Mr. MacDiarmid's introduction is largely pedantic mumbo jumbo, e.g.:

> Mr. Yeats returned to the Upanishads and commended these to the attention of our younger poets. That movement back to the ancient Gaelic classics and then North to Iceland and then East to Persia and India is the course the refluence of Gaelic genius must take.

Yes, Mr. Yeats did return to the Upanishads and he got away with it, but we don't all have to go to Birmingham by way of *Shangri-La*. Mr. MacDiarmid's criticism is as vitiated as Yeats's was by anglophobia—and not nearly so well written—and I cannot believe him when he writes in a note that Scottish literature "is to-day far more internationalist than English literature." Mr. MacDiarmid in his own career has attempted to blend Scottish Nationalism with Leninism and to force Karl Marx to read Alasdair MacMhairghstir Alasdair but it is doubtful if this attempt—from the "internationalist" angle—has been a success. Mr. MacDiarmid has written some beautiful poetry in his synthetic Scots, e.g., his fascinating "Water Music" included in this book, but its virtues are those of his own animal vitality canalised in the Scots tradition of Dunbar and Burns; his Red Flag fails to flap; he remains incorrigibly tartan.

I would agree with Mr. MacDiarmid that Scots is a better medium than English for Scottish poets and that the Scottish scene is still a fertile subject for poetry; Matthew Arnold's complaint about Burns that he was handicapped by an ugly world of Scotch manners, Scotch drink and Scotch religion, is as little valid as the laments of the aesthetes over Gerard Manley Hopkins—"What a great poet he would have been if only he had not been a Jesuit!" The best poems in this anthology are written in Scots and deal with the Scottish scene. The translations from the Gaelic and the Latin are, in their present English form, mainly of historical interest and the pieces in ordinary English strike me on the whole as either insipid or stilted. I think the editor could have dispensed with James Thomson, John Davidson, Young Lochinvar and Andrew Lang.

But what a lot there is here that is alive. Apart from poems which are both familiar and great—the *Lament for the Makers*, *Sir Patrick Spens*, the ballad of *Edward*, *The Twa Corbies*, *The Wife of Usher's Well*, and Burns' *Address to the Deil* and *Holy Willie's Prayer*—there are poems here which few English readers will know but most English readers will be the better for. This is no place or time to talk about the Celtic Genius—"*Lass unsern Herr Gott aus dem Spass*"—but if people expect from the Scots what they insist on expecting from the Irish—a lot of loose blether and mist, they have only to read this book to be healthily disappointed. The typically Scottish poet has an eye, a physical solidity, a precision of phrase, an elegant music and a knack of hard hitting which are admirable. And the vernacular makes their pictures more vivid as in this description of dead moles by a contemporary poet—

> Sma' black tramorts wi' gruntles grey,
> Sma' week weemin's hands—

or as in Dunbar's long satire in punching alliterative verse, the longest poem in this book, which features two wives and a widow. I doubt if any modern English wife writing in modern English could be so beautifully offensive about her husband—

> I have ane wallidrag, ane worme, ane auld wobat carle,
> A waistit wolroun, na worth bot wourdis to clatter;
> Ane bumbart, ane dron bee, ane bag full of flewme,
> Ane skabbit skarth, ane scorpioun, ane scutarde behind.

LOUIS MACNEICE

ALL RELIGIONS

The Bible of the World. Edited by ROBERT O. BALLOU and Others. *Kegan Paul.* 18s.

A formidable work, and, one would have thought, quite unreviewable except by a committee of experts. It consists of extracts from the Scriptures of the eight great religions of the world, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, lengthy extracts—the Old Testament, for example, gets 386 pages, the Buddhist sacred writings 170—set out with notes, glossary and index. The selection of the extracts has been determined by one or more of three considerations; first, they must contain passages essential to the understanding of the doctrines of the religion. Secondly, they must be "of special significance for a modern social and religious philosophy"; thirdly, they must have great literary merit. The notes, which are admirable, contain brief historical summaries of the origin and development of each of the religions, together with some account of their main exponents and the writings in which they are conveyed; they also contain valuable references to parallel passages, so that one can see for oneself how far and how often the teachings of one religion recall or even repeat that of another

While, as I have said, this book is utterly unreviewable, there are certain comments that can usefully be made. Indeed, directly one lets one's mind range at large and at loose over this vast corpus of writing, one finds oneself overwhelmed by a flood of question and comment. Take, for example, the question of parallelism. I had always believed—it has been borne in upon me by a host of critics of Christianity; "Christianity," they have affirmed, "has no monopoly of truth; its essential teachings, when you strip away the trappings of myth and legend, are the same as those of all the great religions"—that the basic affirmations of the religions were the same. That this world is not the only world; that the spirit is both more real and more important than matter which is its creature; that the world of space, time and matter is in some sense illusory; that man's true destiny is to be found elsewhere; that God created the world and is good—these and similar affirmations were, I had believed, common to all the great religions. But the World's Bible makes this belief extremely difficult to sustain. How various, for example, are the teachings of the religions in regard to the beginning of the world! I had supposed that in the beginning there was God and that God created the world. But the Hymns of the Rig Veda (Hindu) begin with a lengthy and obscure discussion as to whether non-existence or existence came first, a discussion which solves the difficulty rather cavalierly, as I cannot help thinking, by the announcement that *first* there was neither non-existence nor existence. The first event that occurred was the event of desiring, but this was not the desiring of any person nor, apparently, was it a desiring for anything. Taoism, on the other hand, is of the opinion that non-existence was first.

> The Portal of God is non-existence. All things sprang from non-existence. Existence could not make existence existence. It must have proceeded from non-existence, and non-existence and nothing are one. Herein—

this passage from the works of Chuang Tze rather surprisingly concludes

> is the abiding place of the sage.

Suppose, however, that we decide to begin with existence; it would be natural to suppose that this existence was the existence of a person, was, in fact, God. But Buddhism denies this. "It denies," that is to say, to quote from the Notes, "or evades the conclusions of Hinduism concerning an intangible supreme Being with its coterie of personified powers in the form of Gods." But even if the existence of God be premised, it is not apparently to be taken for granted that He is good; or rather, if there is a good God, there is also an evil one. This is the teaching of Zoroastrianism, which postulates the presence in the universe from the first of an evil antagonist to the omniscient and apparently omnipotent God of the other religions, an antagonist who becomes prominent in the later books of the Old Testament. Or take the immortality of the soul, which one would have thought to be inseparably bound up with a religious attitude to the universe. Buddhism denies it and denies it partly because it denies the reality of individuality, the ego being, in the words of the Editor, for Buddhism only "a degrading composite of temporary obstructive delusions."

Other examples of radical disagreement in regard to fundamentals could be cited. They are numerous enough to suggest that the fundamental truths of religion are not, to say the least, self evident. This being the case, one would expect, and one would feel entitled to expect, a certain amount of argument in religious writings. Some conclusions one accepts without argument. "Is that a cow, mother?" "Yes, my dear." "Why?" There is no answer to the question. If the conclusion is not accepted without argument—and in the cow case we hope that it will be—no argument can be advanced

to induce its acceptance. But the conclusions of religion do not apparently fall into this self-evident category. In regard to *them*, the question Why? is in the highest degree pertinent. Reasons in fact can be legitimately asked for in support of that which is far from being universally accepted. Yet, by and large, no reasons are given. Religious writers are content to announce, to announce and to rhapsodise and exhort on the basis of what they have announced. It is this high and mighty "Thus saith the Lord" attitude to highly dubious propositions which constitutes to many modern minds one of the greatest obstacles to the acceptance of the religious hypothesis. For many of us it *is* a hypothesis and we must, therefore, be given reasons for accepting it. Instead, we receive announcements which are only significant provided that it be already accepted.

Moreover, the announcements are extremely repetitive. With the exception of the Tao Te King, the Book of Lao Tse, of which it has been said that "never surely has so much thought been compressed into so small a space," and the story of Christ in the Gospels, religious writings seem to say the same thing over and over again in different words. The Editors justly claim for the method of extracts and selections that the message of religion gains "when stripped of its characteristic repetitiveness." Yet even in the extracts this characteristic is still prominent. Nor, for my part, do I feel the claim to great literary merit easy to sustain. It is true, I think, of the New Testament, but how pleasantly the simplicity and the clarity of the Gospels stand out against the lush rhapsodisings of the Hindu, Mahommedan, and Old Testament writers. As to contemporary significance, I would urge a reading of the Tao Te King in which the doctrine of "Let Alone" is given a metaphysical foundation. Not to think, not to act, not, therefore, to resist—it is a message whose import the modern world would do well to ponder.

I hope that enough has been said to indicate the extreme interest and value of this work. The Editors have done us all a service in presenting in a compendious form the evidence upon which, in the last resort, each man must try to decide in his own mind what he thinks about religion.

C. E. M. JOAD

THE CASE OF HERBERT READ

Annals of Innocence and Experience. By HERBERT READ. *Faber.* 10s. 6d.

At the beginning of the present war, during that remote six months when Nothing Happened, Mr. Read, finding himself at a loose end, went on with his reminiscences, begun some ten years ago in *The Innocent Eye*. He has now published the two sections together in this appropriately named volume.

His book reminds me often of Edwin Muir's autobiography, *The Story and the Fable*. Herbert Read and Edwin Muir have much in common. Both come from northern farming stock, both attach much importance to their simple origins. Muir's book, however, has a far greater unity than Read's; and this is perhaps due to the fact that Muir has returned to Scotland, and that he has never allowed the pattern of his life to become over-complicated. A certain single-mindedness shines through his writing even when he is describing the most diverse experiences.

Mr. Read is possibly not a very complex character, but he is certainly a very complicated one. The division between the first part of his book and the later parts is extremely sharp. It is not just a division of circumstances either; it is a division between a simple and a confused state of mind. In the early parts of the book we share Mr. Read's experiences; in the later parts we agree or disagree with his opinions. The opinions are not integrated with the experiences, as they are in Muir's autobiography; there one is able to regard them dispassionately, as part of the man, and not just as a piece of pamphleteering.

When Mr. Read describes, with the utmost detachment and economy, his experiences, he is first rate; when he theorises about art or politics he has arresting things to say, but he tends to be querulous, vague, tenuous, and, at times, very much on the defensive. *The Innocent Eye* and the prose extract from *Ambush* printed here are by Herbert Read, the sensitive recorder; most of the rest of the book is by Herbert Read, the thinker. The former is so good that one cannot help regretting that Mr. Read was not content to remain a sensitive and detached observer. Had he done so we might have an English Turgenev with a clarity and intellectual power greater than that of the American Turgenev, Ernest Hemingway. He might also have been able to express his philosophy of life more concretely and with the greater force for its being implicit.

Herbert Read is a very limited writer. He is lacking in that most unfair of gifts, the interest of an artistic personality (something which Eliot, with all his self-effacingness, has, and Pound, *Il miglior fabbro* though he be, has not). This is not to deny that his artistic development is interesting, but simply to say that every line he writes does not attract one compellingly, in the way that almost every line of Yeats, Eliot or Tolstoi does. His virtues and weaknesses are on the side of excessive purity. At the best he can hold a lens over his experiences which magnifies and intensifies them and gives them a kind of glassy meticulous clarity. He is strong on the side of experience, weak on the side of feeling. I have read poems by him which record an instantaneous snapshot of a symptom of a love experience, but none which produced the impression of a sustained, strong continuous feeling of passion. The heroine of his only novel is a green child with green blood in her veins, living in a pool. The faces of rock crystals, an austere one-line melody, ice, etc., are the highest forms of beauty in Mr. Read's somewhat cold-blooded world; though it is true that they may occasionally be relieved by a frenzied surrealist nightmare.

This discussion of Herbert Read's qualities as a literary artist is by no means irrelevant, because a great deal of *Annals of Innocence and Experience* is concerned with it. Mr. Read suffers from a sense of frustration in his work. This he attributes chiefly to external causes—lack of money, lack of leisure, the constant interruption of trivial tasks and domestic worries.

Such grievances are real; they demand respect and sympathy; and it is courageous to express them. All the same, making due allowances, I cannot believe that many of Mr. Read's readers will agree that his failures—if they are failures—are to be attributed entirely to external causes. There is a romantic side of Mr. Read's nature which seems to believe that, given slightly different circumstances, entirely different and much better poems and books would have emerged from his study, like rabbits from a hat. Yet against that one must assume that even if a great deal of his energy has been misdirected, the genuine vein of his inspiration must also have been tapped. Moreover, if this inspiration had been really forceful it would have carried everything before it, and would in the long run have resulted in a greater success

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than hack work of a literary and highbrow kind can do. Unless writers are prepared to debase themselves completely by writing film scenarios, advertisements and gossip columns, they had better write their best as much and as often as possible, rather than be side-tracked into ill-paid literary journalism. Even from a financial point of view it would, during the past twenty years, have paid a writer of his reputation better to write a poem than a review. For once it had established itself, a good poem would be reprinted in collections and anthologies and become a regular source of income. The unfortunate thing is that anxiety about money seems to develop in some writers a kind of inverted artistic conscience which compels them to do hack work, and which makes them unwilling to admit that they might earn money by doing their best work.

No, I don't think the financial explanation is entirely convincing in Mr. Read's case. My complaint is that he has not been prepared to accept and exploit his own limitations, by which he might have developed into a supremely good writer in a very limited sphere. He has spread out in too many directions, substituting for a lack of emotional depth heated opinions on a great many topics, artistic and political.

It would require a great deal of space to discuss here all the opinions which Mr. Read sets forth in this book. They are greatly to be respected, but I think they have nearly always two flaws: an incapacity ever to see more than half a problem at a time, and an almost feverish faith in what he calls romanticism, which is really his name for the unknown and the new. In every sphere of life Mr. Read sees barriers of convention; tear down these barriers, and all sorts of new and wonderful forces will be released. He therefore supports every new movement, surrealism, abstractionism, expressionism, and so on, which seem to be on the side of this release:

> In romantic art . . . (he says), certain laws of proportion and rhythm are observed . . . but . . . the work of art then seems to take a leap into the unknown. The laws themselves are contradicted, or are entirely disregarded; and a new reality is created, requiring a sudden passage from perception to intuition, and carrying with it a heightened mode of consciousness.

I must confess that this is practically meaningless to me. And if it means anything, it seems to me that the process of intuition and leaping into the unknown would apply equally to a writer like Racine, who, nevertheless, has the highest regard for all the laws. Mr. Read seems to believe that there is some mysterious virtue in breaking the laws of art just for the sake of breaking them. Personally, I think that the only reason for breaking them is because the material of art in new circumstances has to create new forms for itself, finding the old ones unsuited to what it has to express.

In the last analysis, it is true that Mr. Read is a romantic, because he does not believe in evil and therefore he does not believe in the necessity of restraint. His anarchism and his aesthetic theories are based on Rousseau. It is possibly the lack of a belief in evil that accounts for the tenuousness and transparency of his poetry and opinions. Whatever the merits of the arguments on either side, the writers with a sense of evil are also the writers who are most able to create character, and who have the most concrete vision of life. The writers who have no sense of evil tend towards abstractionism, bloodlessness and transparency.

Yet however much one may disagree with parts of it, this is an extremely interesting book. Perhaps it is too late to hope that Mr. Read may take his fingers out of all his aesthetic and political pies, and return to the pure vision of his Innocent Eye (which can never be lost). If it is, I hope, at any rate, that his next book will be devoted to Romanticism.

STEPHEN SPENDER

A CURIOUS EYE

Selected Poems. By WILLIAM PLOMER. *Hogarth Press.* 2s. 6d.

For some years I have been an admirer of Mr. Plomer's verse as it has appeared in the magazines; in that way I have "followed" him (as they say), often passing over a more hallowed name in order to reach his. He rarely lets one down. There the poem is, hard and sharp on the page, stamped in, while those around may seem hastily pencilled or floating off from some serial-writing to which one has momentarily lost the key. It hasn't been dashed off to catch a post; it tells a story or paints a picture; as a piece of writing it is, to an exceptional degree, all there. Atmosphere of place or person is one of Mr. Plomer's strong points, but it is an atmosphere conveyed by knife-sharp images and well-aimed words. Whang, the eye is pinned down neatly, thrillingly to its object. When Mr. Plomer wants us to see an old snapshot in an album he has the exact tint ready, "now like very weak tea"; his Captain Maru, a Japanese gentleman-tough executing a sword-dance on the deck, leaps "bare-legged, with feet as vigorous as hands"—how admirably that focuses the squat, prehensile attitudes of the Jap dancer we have all seen in prints! Many of the images and descriptive touches in Mr. Plomer's poetry are aimed at the eye, but he is not narrowly *visuel;* his communication is through whichever sense will most immediately convey his meaning. Tangibility and a certain intellectual hardness, these in conjunction give his work definition:

> That was the Africa we knew,
> Where, wandering alone,
> We saw, heraldic in the heat,
> A scorpion on a stone.

"Heraldic," used there to denote finality—the pungency with which small details can sometimes light a whole landscape or phase of living—is something more than the best epithet for the occasion. The sort of microcosm lying behind its choice may be guessed from another poem, "The Death of a Snake." Here the reader is made to feel actively as well as see:

> Bruised by a heel he strove to die,
> In frantic spirals bored the air,
> Turned his pale belly upward to the sky
> In coitus with death: and here and there
> Scored in the dust quick ideographs of pain—
> These, that the wind removed, in memory remain.

It is interesting to remark that what one carries away from this poem is not half-a-dozen lines of verse, to be remembered, but a picture, a sensation, a quick movement traced on a screen. These, at least, are what remained vividly in my mind when I came to re-read the poem, after seven years. And it is characteristic of Mr. Plomer's poetry in general—most of it admirably written—that its impact, its idea, should be memorable rather than the words themselves. One "remembers" passages of prose in much the same way. Is that a weakness? No, I don't think so; but it serves to define the sort of quality that a reader will find in *Selected Poems.* There are no loose ends, no frames that drop away to disclose wider views, none of the incalculable lilts or changes of direction that seek the co-operation of the reader. All that Mr. Plomer has to say is said tersely and unambiguously; when an effect is needed, it is supplied—trimmed and tested; any latent element of words has been carefully weighed too. The lack of submerged vision or impulse means that everything is brought to the surface, exposed to an eye hardened by the tropics. After the poems of Africa, Japan, and Greece (the book is divided geographically), where the bright and curious overlay human weakness, we come to the dull ache of London:

> See the poor war-widow, with disabled heart,
> With what nice irony she lays a wreath of poppies
> Against that futile stump, the Cenotaph—
> Flowers of forgetfulness will help her to remember
> That memory's an opiate to dull the jagged truth . . . .

It is true enough, and well and ingeniously put, but the tableau working out in sensation does not affect us like the pattern of the dying snake. Mr. Plomer's latest poetry, reflecting scenes of depression and near-war, shows a sharp division; in some (those about lovers, for example) his sympathies are engaged, in others he exercises a jaunty cruelty. "Vagabond Love" and "Mews Flat Mona" are very good examples of these two kinds, comparable to similar excursions by Mr. Auden, but the ironic relish seems to me a little empty—a feeling one rarely has with his earlier writing.

Perhaps the reason why I have always looked out Mr. Plomer in periodicals and fought shy of him in volume is a doubt as to how far his work would add up. It adds up more than I had supposed. A number of the pieces in *Selected Poems* are fresh to me and they increase my respect for his talent. Some of his newer lines (in the commercial sense) strike me as less successful than the earlier, but still they strike.

G. W. STONIER

The Music Review. Vol. 1. No. 4. *Heffer.* 4s.

This number of *The Music Review* is in some ways the best so far: much more lively than the last, it is almost everything that such a periodical should be. Even within the space of a shorter notice one can hardly avoid listing the chief items, so we must mention a warm appreciation of the late Professor Donald Tovey by William Saunders; an addendum to vol. III of the Professor's own Essays in Musical Analysis, in the form of a brief note on Schumann's seldom heard *Concerto for Four Horns;* a long list of addenda et corrigenda to the Köchel Verzeichnis, which will be invaluable to owners of that fascinating work of reference; a review of the work of John Ireland, by A. E. F. Dickinson; and a learned article on "Music in Mediaeval Baghdad," by Dennis Stoll. There is also a short, but most pertinent, plea by E. G. Porter for new and definitive translations of the text of the great German Lieder—translations which the singer could sing without blushing for their ineptitude. To this might be added a further plea that the gramophone companies should issue, with recordings of such songs, a leaflet containing the words, without which the listener to Schubert or Wolf cannot possibly detect or enjoy the fine points of the setting.

It was only fitting that a journal devoted to music should pay homage just now to that great man, Tovey. It will be surprising indeed if the six volumes of his musical analyses do not turn out to be the most acute, searching and original discussions of the subject written in the first half of the century. Thus it should be sufficient praise to say that he would surely have approved Mr. Dickinson's able summing-up of John Ireland, a composer of great talent and real lyrical gift whose music has, however, suffered from that fatal insularity that has enfeebled so much English music in the last hundred years. On the other hand, I can hear Professor Tovey making short work of H. G. Sear's contention that Marx "invaded" music via the libretti of Verdi's operas. This disingenuous thesis is typical of doctrinaire Marxists, who never fail to omit the facts that do not suit their purpose. Those facts, in this case, are that Verdi was an uneducated man who followed a right instinct in demanding of his librettists strongly drawn types of humanity embroiled in a dramatic action. It mattered nothing to him that, until he ran across Boito, the result was for the most part a series of inept and confused melodramas, sometimes of inconceivable absurdity, and not much more that the times in which they were composed naturally led the writers to introduce the current ideas of Liberalism: revolutionary sentiment has always been, and always will be, productive of dramatic situations. Mr. Sear holds that it was Verdi's musical expression of these sentiments that was responsible for his immense popularity; but Puccini was, and is, at least as popular, and he never dealt in such themes at all. One would like to know what Marxists propose with regard to composers who do not set texts susceptible of "economic" exegesis. How are Schumann and Schubert fitted into the canon—

or Johann Stamitz, a predecessor of Haydn whose symphonies are sympathetically considered here in an article by Peter Gradenwitz? It cannot be too often or too bluntly asserted that the business of all artists, including composers, is the rendering, in forms which are eternal and therefore in the highest degree expressive, of emotions that are common to the generality of mankind in *whatever* form of society,

The Christ at Chartres. By DENIS SAURAT. *Dent.* 4s.

Two years ago Messrs. Faber published in their series of poets a little book by M. Saurat called *The End of Fear*. Its method—for want of a better phrase—might be called "poetic reporting," that linking of lyrical impulse with significant anecdote seen at its most striking in Marcel Jouhandeau. The circumstances that produced *The End of Fear* were that M. Saurat revisited, on the occasion of his father's death, the Pyrenean village where he had been born, and found there a forgotten world. The mother, an old peasant woman, talked and talked, and in her lamentation M. Saurat discovered a pre-Christian lore, which he fascinatingly transcribed. Some of these peasant beliefs corresponded to ideas which he had himself elaborated as a philosopher; this and the emotions of a strange meeting are the core of his book.

The End of Fear has been referred to at some length because it deserves to be more widely known and because it is a better book than *The Christ at Chartres* in a similar kind. M. Saurat now brings together a number of meetings with humble people who have described to him spontaneously their mystical experiences. Several of these people—including a verger, a university professor, a peasant, in different corners of France—had in common the vision of a Christ-created world, a world that began with Christ's birth and has spread backwards and forwards in time since. The revelations of this strange belief in the form of visions, telepathy, stigmata, are described by the persons themselves, though their speech has been formalised. A number of passages, excellently chosen, from Blake and Victor Hugo, have been interleaved to "bring beauty to the book." *The End of Fear* did not need such embellishment. And while in the earlier book the author's *acceptance* of some of the ideas he was reporting did not matter one way or the other, here the reader is jarred into questioning. How far does M. Saurat go with the mythology he transcribes? What importance does he attach to these half-dozen strange survivals of a medieval faith? *The Christ at Chartres* gives us remarkable glimpses of a Christianity outside the doctrines of the church, but we are not in the end convinced that these folk-beliefs are either as widespread or as significant as M. Saurat would seem to suggest.

About Motoring

ROAD CASUALTIES AND BOMB CASUALTIES

DURING the worst week of air raids yet sustained by this country the deaths were less than half the number of people killed on the roads in the corresponding week of 1939, and the total number of persons injured was one-fifteenth of the road toll for the 1939 week. Yet there is no comparison whatever between the impressions which the two weeks of casualties made on the public mind, or between the energy and expenditure developed in preventive methods. The public as a body has always been listless and indifferent to road casualties, though a minority of humane individuals have toiled hard to stir the national conscience, and to launch a tremendous preventive campaign. But the mere threat of bomb casualties created a colossal A.R.P. army; extorted the free gift of 2,500,000 Anderson shelters at £8 to the poor; moved the wealthier citizens to spend a far larger sum on private garden shelters; wrung millions of free gas-masks and A.R.P. booklets from the Government; and was no small factor in reconciling rich and poor alike to the cost of developing the R.A.F. This contrast is all the more striking when we reflect that we are ourselves responsible for the road casualties, and that these deaths and injuries are in very large

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measure preventible, whilst we are not nationally or individually responsible for the German *Luftwaffe*, and cannot at the moment do any more to reduce or prevent its ravages.

It would, of course, be criminal to rest content with recording the existence of such an irrational contrast. Its causes should be analysed; and when analysed, should be remembered with a view to strenuous action on the return of peace. A superficial view explains our callousness about road casualties as due to selfishness. The average road-user, it is said, remarks as Americans used to say of Fascism, "It can't happen to me!" Be he motorist or cyclist or pedestrian, he has confidence in his own road sense; so far he has managed to dodge being involved in a smash, and he believes that he will be equally successful till the day when he is reduced to a bath chair. This illusion is probably an element in public callousness about the roads, but only a very minor element. The main truth is that the ordinary individual only learns through his eyes; his education is far more largely visual than either he or his Government have ever troubled to realise. He has hardly any visual knowledge of road accidents. Once or twice in his journeyings his car has reached the scene of a recent smash, but he has not seen any of the horrible details. Either the interval since the smash has been long enough for the road to be cleansed of blood and brain and guts, and only a couple of bent and buckled cars hastily hauled on to the grass verge bear visual witness to the tragedy. Or if the human wreckage had not yet been cleared, a screen of cars and police and other helpers hid the mess from easy view, and his wife screamed from the back seats, "Oh, Henry, how dreadful! Hurry past—*hurry!*" And feeling a little sick, he was glad to obey, and toned down his own driving for a week or two.

But for many years past the public has been given plenty of sensory impressions of bombing raids, if only at secondhand. The Hendon displays, lurid newspaper articles on the Spanish war, photographs and news-reels and aviation films have all combined to stamp deeply into his imagination the utter helplessness of soft, exposed human beings under a bombing attack, and in particular of the awful slaughter possible when large fleets of German aeroplanes sweep majestically over a town, defended or undefended. Their threat is not merely a threat of death or mutilation, but strikes deep at the almost universal instinct of claustrophobia, with its nightmare of being buried under the debris of a tall building, or pinned down in agony under beams and masonry with little or no hope of rescue, and maybe without access to kindly drugs. He has already been waked in the night to hear the mournful, pessimistic wail of sirens, followed anon by the ruthless rumble of giant planes miles over his roof and head. There are no moments of day or night when this horror may not descend upon him, and find him uniformly helpless. The whole of his sensory mechanism is kept ceaselessly stimulated; so even though the risk to any named individual is as yet microscopic, and has not begun to compare even distantly with the daily perils of the road, which he has faced cheerily and thoughtlessly for a generation, the lesser risk has a thousand times more influence on his imagination.

The obvious moral is that after the war we must relentlessly employ sensory means to educate our people to the perils of the road, so that public opinion will insist on all rational preventive methods. The simpler expedients are connected with the films; and with the American policy of leaving wrecked cars in prominent positions by the roadside; and of erecting boards with such facts as "Twenty-three persons were killed on the road between here and X—— last year!" R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 572

Set by J. L. Hodson

We offer the usual prizes for a conversation between two British soldiers on first sighting the Invading Host in the Channel. The two soldiers might be two Other Ranks, or two officers or one of each, no limit being set to rank. Competitors may choose any time of day or night and any weather, and should limit themselves to 200 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, January 27.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 569

Set by Mary Nicholson

In ancient times the supernatural signs which preceded great events were somewhat standardised. The usual prizes are offered for a set of original portents which might herald:

(1) A New Year's Day invasion. (2) The Destruction of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION offices by enemy action. (3) The entry of the Greeks into Rome. (4) The appointment of Charles Chaplin as Ambassador to London. (5) The marriage of Hitler to an Aryan maiden.

Report by Mary Nicholson

The celestial powers must have had a difficult time with portents; THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION competitors, too, find it awkward to get them quite right. Ambiguity, of course, doesn't matter—it helps to keep the prophets in work and provides a pleasant margin for human (and divine) fallibility. Destiny marches on and Apollo pops through the loopholes. His querulous voice is heard from a rosy cloud; "No, I didn't mean you were going to *win*, I meant you were going to *lose*."

A double meaning, in fact, is an asset to any portent. The only flops are those which haven't enough meaning, or meanings, and which might not get noticed. Many of the entries don't seem to me sufficiently striking. Some of the portents are too likely; others are too rational, being causes rather than signals; others—specimens of human behaviour—are just odd, but not supernatural.

There was the right touch of magic in Guy Innes's suggestion for the New Year's Day invasion. "Capitalists flying inland" gives me a vivid disagreeable picture of large black pin-striped birds with plump bellies and vulturine faces, against a grey sky. Everyone would guess what that meant.

No. 2 was disappointing. Imagination seems to boggle at the idea of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION headquarters destroyed. No. 3 was better. "Levitation of the Elgin marbles," "A brisk fall of castor oil on Mussolini's palace in Rome," "Smoke pouring from Vesuvius took the shape of a huge bullfrog, which, bursting, let out showers of melted ice-cream."

Charlie Chaplin inspired verse:

When East End skies
Rain custard pies
And West End cats
Wear bowler hats,

we may expect him to become Ambassador. Alternatively, when a pair of broken boots is seen walking between Liverpool and London.

Hitler's marriage was briefly heralded by "storks leaving Europe" and "red rain dropping from our Christmas mistletoe." Also a more complex apparition of "a seedy phoenix, struggling to rise, falls back among the ashes. A dove, having waited, patient and starving, on a branch nearby, falls off it, dead from disappointment."

The trouble about awarding prizes is that nearly all competitors, even the best, failed over at least one of the events. And some of the liveliest entries disqualify themselves by being, in the classical tradition, unprintable. I suggest, therefore, that only one prize of one guinea be awarded, to:

1. *New Year's Day Invasion.*—At the first stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve all the cats on the hearths of the Cinque Ports are changed into miaowing seagulls.

2. *Destruction of* THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION *offices by enemy action.*—Lightning on the Right.

3. *Entry of Greeks into Rome.*—Appearance of evzones in Mussolini's blood-stream.

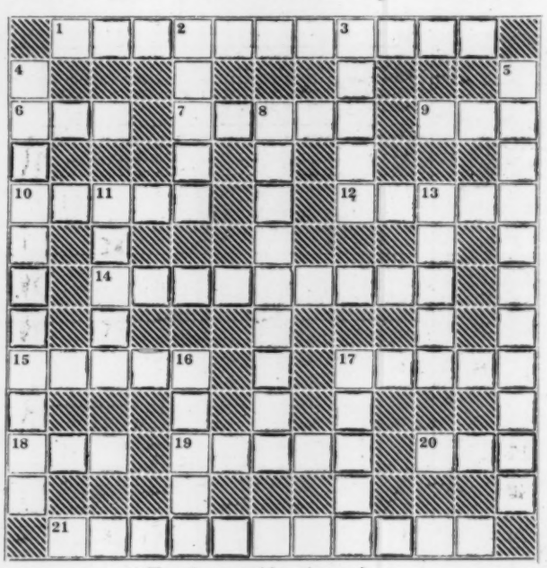
4. *Appointment of Charles Chaplin as Ambassador to London.*—Bowler-shaped speck reported by Greenwich observatory to be spreading over Mars.

5. *Marriage of Hitler to an Aryan maiden.*—All the black poodles in Frankfurt whistle the Merry Widow waltz on Easter morning.

SGMN. I. F. PARRY.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 15

Set by V. S.



The last week's winner is:

Lt-Col. P. J. Jory, Denton Park, Ilkley, Yorks.

ACROSS.

1. *Rev.* (though not without your leave?) (4, 2 & 5)
6. & 9. Danish Bacon Permit. (6)
7. He and his two Peers were equal to the Sovereign. (5)
10. Neck and neck. (5)
12. Self-styled pattern of plainness for a suit. (5)
14. Before taking painful advice. (9)
15. *rev.* Grave enough to make a German count the last farthing. (5)
17. Staff of a club on strike. (5)
18 & 20. *rev.* How to put your shirt on when wearing a waistcoat. (6)
19. S.P. for sale? (5)
20. Fly-half. (3)
21. Such as have lost their identity? (4 hyphen 7)

DOWN

2. Givers of original Christmas presents. (5)
3. P.P.C. from Conger-Eels. (5)
4. I.R.A. out of tune? (6, 2 & 3)
5. People participating in plenty of parties. (11)
8. Watermen? (4 & 5)
11. Initially in the care of Sir Joshua Reynolds. (5)
13. Fashion in art. (5)
16. Make a horse a horse-collar. (5)
17. Christopher Marlowe turned undergraduate. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," "NEW STATESMAN AND NATION," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

DOLLAR REQUISITIONING—A NEW TAXATION SCHEME—HOME RAILWAYS

ANOTHER requisitioning (the fourth) of American stocks held by British residents was announced by the Treasury this week. Sad farewells will be paid by many investors to such old favourites as Anaconda, American Telephone, American Smelting and Great Northern Railroad preferred. Apart from the inequalities of incidence as between one capitalist and another which these requisitionings entail—investors who had the wisdom or courage to choose a good American stock are the first to be penalised—I question the soundness of disposing of all our semi-liquid resources in the United States in what may be the early stages of the war, British residents have illiquid investments in South America worth thousands of millions of dollars—principally in railroads and public utilities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Peru. It is a policy of the Washington Government to knit the Americas together economically, and I should have thought that it could have prevailed upon financial and public utility managements in the U.S.A. to take over British holdings in South American countries of this illiquid but interesting type. The residents themselves of these Latin Republics would benefit from the greater efficiency and financial resources which the new controllers of their railroads and public utilities would import. My complaint about the Treasury is that they do not try to dispose of the foreign investments which we can best afford to sell.

* * *

Mr. Norman Crump in the *Sunday Times* has some interesting proposals for the reform of the present system of income-tax allowances and abatements, which link up with the restriction of home trade and the compulsory savings plan of Mr. Keynes. The Ministry of Food and the Board of Trade, which are responsible respectively for food rationing and the limitation of supplies, should decide, he suggests, how much each individual can be allowed to spend on his own keep and the maintenance of his family. These calculations should fix absolute income-tax allowances to be deducted from gross income. The residue would be the taxable income, that is, the part which could be spent on non-essentials. If the Government decided that the production and consumption of non-essentials should be only one-eighth of what it was before the war, then the taxpayer should be asked to pay in tax or subscribe in loans the equivalent of 17*s.* 6*d.* in the pound of his residual income. Mr. Crump believes that rent, rates, insurance premiums and education up to the cost of State-aided education, should rank as absolute allowances to be deducted from gross income. It is a scheme which is well worth consideration, for it brings the national spending power down to the limit imposed by the restriction of the home trade.

* * *

Home railway stocks are enjoying their annual activity on the eve of the dividend announcements. It is obvious that the net revenues for 1940 will not be much in excess of Stage 1, namely, the Government's minimum guarantee of £41 millions a year. Even this will afford excellent dividends, for the minimum guarantee allows the payment of the following "equity" dividends—L.M. and S. 1 per cent. and Great Western 3 per cent. on the ordinary, Southern 1 per cent. on the deferred stocks. The cheapest of the junior preference stocks appear to be the following :—

	Times dividend covered*	Price	Dividend Yield %
L.M.S. 4% 1st Pref. ...	1.2	54½	£7 6 0
L.M.S. 4% 2nd Pref. ...	1.1	40	£8 0 0
L.N.E.R. 4% 1st Pref. ...	1.1	37½	£10 13 6
Southern 5% Pref. Ord. ...	1.0	52	£9 12 0

* On the Government's minimum guarantee.

These high dividend yields would not be obtainable if the market felt confident that the railways' agreement with the Government would hold good for the rest of the war. But it is not confident. It is sensitive to the growing chorus of complaints about the transport hold-up—the cluttering up of docks, sidings and warehouses with raw materials and manufactured goods which the railways cannot handle. It is becoming aware that the railways were asked (at their own request) to do too much—that insufficient use is being made of road transport and the canals—and that if there is not to be nationalisation there will have to be more complete co-ordination of all forms of transport and an allocation of traffic between them by a central transport authority. Obviously a financial agreement secured by one form of transport from the Treasury in its own (? selfish) interests is not one which will pass the test of public criticism in any new national scheme.

SPECIALISED TRAINING

ANSTEY PHYSICAL TRAINING COLLEGE
Complete Teachers' Training for Girls in all Branches of Physical Education, Gymnastics, Games, Dancing, etc. Recognised training centre for London University Diploma in Physical Education, and Certificate of the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastics.
Apply : SECRETARY, Anstey College, Erdington, Birmingham.

FELLOWSHIP

LEVERHULME RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS, 1941

Application is invited for (i) Fellowships or (ii) Grants in aid of research. The Fellowships or Grants are intended for senior workers who are prevented from carrying out research work by routine duties or pressure of other work. They are limited to British-born subjects normally resident in Great Britain. In exceptional circumstances the Trustees may waive the condition as to residence.

The Trustees are also prepared to consider applications from groups of workers engaged upon co-operative programmes of research—particularly from those engaged upon long-distance programmes or in Institutions in which the normal facilities for research have been curtailed by the war.

The duration of the awards will not normally extend over more than two years or less than three months and the amount will depend on the nature of the research and the circumstances of the applicant.

Forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary, Dr. L. Haden Guest, M.C., M.P., Leverhulme Research Fellowships, Kingscote House, 1 Watergate, Blackfriars, London, E.C.4.

Applications must be received on or before March 1st, 1941. Awards will be announced in July and will date from September 1st, 1941.

January, 1941.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Applications are invited for the post of Language Supervisor in the European Service of the Overseas Division. Candidates should be British nationals and must be thoroughly conversant with at least one Continental language in its written and spoken form. The work will include the checking of translations of news bulletins and other material broadcast. A knowledge of international affairs and first-hand experience of Continental cultures are essential qualifications.

Applicants must be over thirty years of age, unless exempt from Military Service. Date of birth should be stated.

Salary will be according to age and qualifications, and will rise to a maximum of £690 per annum.

The posts now vacant are for the duration of the war only and do not carry entry to the permanent staff.

Applications marked "Language Supervisor" should be sent to the Overseas Recruitment Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, by January 31st, 1941. Candidates requiring acknowledgment of their applications and notification of the final result should enclose two stamped and addressed envelopes.

PROFESSIONAL woman needs intelligent mother's help or nannie. Boy 4, girl 14 months. As family. Near Henley. Box 8502.

SPARE TIME
is well spent in reading for a DEGREE

● **One of to-day's problems** is that of making the best use of leisure hours, whether at home, on civil defence, or on active service. To those who are studiously inclined we suggest that spare time might well be occupied in reading for a Degree ; not merely for the material post-war advantages, but also for the widening of outlook and development of mental abilities. Moreover, under experienced and sympathetic guidance study becomes a pleasurable occupation.

● **London University Degrees** are open to all. You need not attend the University. All that is necessary is to pass three exams., Matriculation (or, if you are over 23, the shorter Special Entrance Exam.), Intermediate and Final ; you may study for these at home and in your own time, wherever you are.

● **Wolsey Hall Postal Courses** for the above examinations are conducted by a staff of 56 University Graduates. These Courses comprise Lessons, Test Papers, Model Answers, correction of your work and solution of *all* difficulties by your tutors. A Guarantee is given that, in the event of failure, tuition will be continued *free*. Fees may be spread over the period of the Course.

● **Write for Free Guide** to Degrees (saying if your preference is for Arts, Science, Economics, Commerce, Law or Theology) to C. D. Parker, M.A., LL.D., Director of Studies, Dept. VH24,

Wolsey Hall, Oxford

PROPRIETORS : DIPLOMA CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE, LTD.

APPOINTMENTS—continued

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Applications are invited for various vacancies arising in connection with the organisation, administration and production of broadcasts to Europe and Overseas. Candidates should give full details of their education and careers, with special reference to languages, experience abroad and knowledge of international affairs.

The posts now vacant are for the duration of the war only and do not carry entry to the permanent staff.

Applicants must be over thirty years of age, unless exempt from Military Service. Date of birth should be stated.

Salaries will be according to age, grade of appointment and qualifications, certain senior appointments carrying a maximum of £1,000 a year.

Applications marked "Europe" or "Overseas" should be sent to the Overseas Recruitment Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, by January 25th, 1941. Two stamped and addressed envelopes should be enclosed.

APPOINTMENTS—continued

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Applications are invited for the post of Announcer or Translator, or both, in any one of the following languages :—French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Finnish, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Serbo-Croat, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Russian, Arabic and Turkish.

Candidates, who need not be of British nationality, should possess a sound general education and should have some acquaintance with international affairs. Experience of broadcasting or of writing for publication in their own countries, though not essential, will be considered an advantage.

Applicants should state their date of birth.

The posts now vacant are for the duration of the war only and do not carry entry to the permanent staff.

Salary will be according to age and qualifications, and will rise to a maximum of £600 per annum.

Applications with the name of the language marked on the covering envelope should be sent to the Overseas Recruitment Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, by January 25th, 1941. Two stamped and addressed envelopes should be enclosed.

TEACHER wanted, Pinewood. See School advertisements.

GOOD opportunity for capable youth, with technical aptitude to learn radio and electrical business. Write only, stating age, experience if any, and salary expected. DRAZIN LTD., 59 Heath Street, Hampstead, N.W.3.

CLUB Leaders Wanted for : (1) Hucknell and East Kirkby ; (2) Newark, Nottinghamshire ; (3) Lymington, Hampshire. Salaries £200 p.a. Applications together with copies of three recent testimonials to the EMPLOYMENT OFFICER, National Council of Girls Clubs, Hamilton House, Bidborough St., W.C.1.

HOME and small salary offered to cultured woman willing to help run flat and care for child (4½). Write "A," 5 Bridge Street, Leighton Buzzard, Beds, giving particulars, terms, interests.

LADY seeks residential post, any capacity. Light household duties ; secretarial ; specially good with children. Haslemere or S.W. Surrey district preferred. Write Box 8499.

SECRETARIAL post in country house desired by woman, 27 years of age. Light domestic duties also undertaken if necessary. Box 8495.

SECURE job lost (health stopped outdoor work). Woman author and reviewer (Oxford) urgently needs literary or social work (experienced both), mentally not physically strenuous. Unheroic, "safe" area preferred. Quaker attitude to war. Box 8493.

CULTIVATED Young Austrian Lady, nursing experience, recom'd as companion by MRS. CORNFORD, Conduit Head, Cambridge.

YOUNG cultured lady, French, Spanish, German, experienced sec., housekeeper, cook, seeks position. Box 8480.

YOUNG Man wishes to be nurse-valet to invalid gentleman or youth. Vegetarian preferred. Excellent ref. Box 8491.

CAR FOR SALE

ARMSTRONG-SIDDELEY 17 Long Saloon for sale. Perfect running order. Nearly new tyres. Ring ROBERTS, Holborn 3216, or write, c/o this paper.